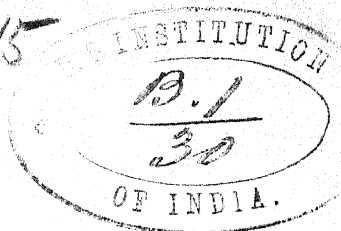


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VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD.

By THE MARQUIS DE BEAUVOIR.

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"J'étais là; telle chose m'advint."—LA FONTAINE.  
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IN TWO VOLUMES.—Vol. II.

JAVA, SIAM, CANTON.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1870.

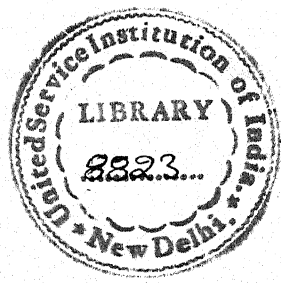
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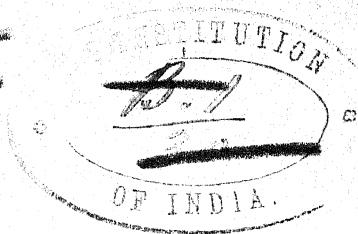
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JAVA, SIAM, CANTON.

CHAPTER XV.

A WEEK AT BATAVIA.

Leafy bowers shading the streets and canals — A Javanese hotel — Brilliant colours of the dresses — Fashionable life from four o'clock in the morning — An odalisque — The nabob's villas — Poisonous and deadly miasmas.

Batavia, 10th November, 1866.—The last inhabitants of Australia of whom we took leave were cannibals, with black skins and carrying poisoned arrows: the first to receive us on the soil of Java are Dutch custom-house officers, pale and fair, dressed in brilliant uniforms, and bearing huge bunches of keys. They softened for us the transition from savage to civilised life by the ruthless opening of our boxes and entire upsetting of their contents. Under the great shed of the Custom House, some 400 chocolate-coloured porters, with bare chests, scarlet sashes, and green turbans, fight for our luggage, and carry it off at a run. My anxious glance follows a certain hat-box, with a cluster of sixteen coolies clinging wildly to it, yelling with all their might, and finally becoming lost in the crowd.

We get, two and two, into some charming little open carriages, which seem to abound here, it being essential to the dignity of a European never to go on foot. Each is drawn by Lilliputian ponies, like Newfoundland dogs, brought from the island of Timor, with close-cropped manes, and knowing little heads, and who go a tremendous pace. The eccentric-looking coachmen who goad them on with voice and whip are Malays, wearing red and yellow striped hats like enormous bell-glasses, which shade them entirely. In this manner we pass at a gallop through the old town of Batavia, built on the unhealthy mud of the sea-shore. Here there are only the dwellings of the natives, and a good many counting-houses, whose old-fashioned gable ends recall the Dutch buildings of the last century, and contrast curiously with the luxuriant verdure of tropical vegetation. In these lanes plenty of Chinamen are to be seen with their conceited strut, rich dandies of the Celestial Empire, with heads well shaved, and tails so tightly plaited that they always make one long to pull them. A Malay shades them from the sun with an immense sky-blue umbrella. For more than three-quarters of an hour our drive continues, and we pass by the most novel sights. We skirt canals, where groups of thirty or forty Malay women are bathing, and are suddenly startled in their gambols by a pirogue, heavily laden with fruit, moving silently along by the aid of its languid paddles. Here comes a troop of native cavalry, trotting "*à l'anglaise*;" their swords, as tall as their horses, trail upon the ground; their long spears touch

the plumes of the cocoa-nut trees: these Malays, with their gingerbread complexions and hanging lips, are dressed up as European soldiers, and their bare feet decorated with magnificent spurs intended for jack-boots. There, numbers of itinerant merchants, adorned with "langoutis"¹ of the most vivid colours, traverse the streets at the peculiar trotting pace common to Indians; gesticulating, apostrophising the passers-by, and laughing loudly. It is the most bewildering, the most picturesque, the liveliest crowd I ever saw. It would take me hours to describe its thousand colours, the inconceivable specimens of humanity that compose it, its noisy pantomimic animation. But soon we cross a bridge, and enter the new town. Oh, what a garden of fairyland, what a verdant paradise this is! Literally speaking, there are no streets in Batavia; there are only splendid avenues, shaded by the most beautiful and luxuriant trees, which form immense long bowers, such as in Europe are only seen in a scene at the opera. The fiery rays of a pitiless sun can only at intervals penetrate this shade, but they deck all that forms it with marvellous hues: the many plumes of the cocoa-nut tree; the slender branches of the tulip tree, which are all flower, and scarlet flower; bananas with their green leaves as large as a man; cotton trees, covered with snow white tufts; the travellers' palm, great fans of the most exquisite grace, from which a stream of a milky fluid springs, if you pierce the trunk; finally,

¹ A narrow sash tied round the loins.

immense banyan trees, from which hundreds of creepers fall straight down, and taking root almost as soon as they touch the ground, climb again to the summit of the tree, twining round it in knotted garlands, only to fall again! One of these trees alone forms a forest surrounded by a curtain, a network of interlaced foliage and flowers, through which children in a state of nature, putting on one side the hundreds of creepers waving in the wind, can look at the boats and the swimmers passing along the canal.

The greater part of these bowers of the tropical Babylon are, in fact, only the footpaths to the "arroyos," the great water-ways, which the Dutch would certainly have formed by hundreds, in recollection of their mother-country, if the Malays had not already made them in thousands. Thus the instincts of the white race from the north and the yellow race of the equator coincided. The greatest navigators and the greatest pirates in the world cut up their soil into innumerable islets, and the canals in this town are the veins by which circulates their whole commercial life. Another many-coloured bower therefore, to our left, shades the arroyo on whose opposite shore we are driving. I cannot take my eyes from the innumerable vessels that traverse it; the laughing groups paddling in the water, the tufts of water-lilies blooming there. To the right—through clumps of coffee trees, nutmeg trees, vanilla trees, and tamarinds—we catch glimpses of lawns, in fairy-like gardens; and in the distance the white palaces and green verandahs of the European nabobs. I had seen

nothing but these avenues and villas, and fancied myself in some delightful suburb of the city, when we found ourselves at the hotel, "der Nederlanden," which, it appears, is in the centre of Batavia; so that this blossoming wood is the town itself! I am in such ecstasies with it, I can hardly believe my eyes. By the beard of all the monkeys with long tails or short that I have yet seen, I swear that it is impossible to describe to you my amazement and admiration. Our new dwelling is situated in the midst of a garden, and sheltered by large trees. The principal building, which is of marble, is supported by an airy colonnade, into which it opens on all sides; on the side of the street and the canal is a circular verandah, where officers, grown thin from the heat, are lounging in cane rocking-chairs. On the opposite side a great oval-shaped kiosk, open to all the winds, but protected by a light roof from the sun, serves as a dining-room. Some sixty Malay servants are swarming like ants to lay the table there. Nothing can be prettier than their long robes, made of red cotton or silk, their blue turbans, and yellow sashes, set off by the whiteness of the balconies and the pavement. Two long wings, of one story only, with verandahs and colonnades, enclose the gardens commanded by the kiosk. Here are our rooms, and on entering them we feel a real sensation of freshness, a delicious temperature compared to that outside; there, in fact, the thermometer is at 114° , and here it is kind enough to go down to 102° . It is five o'clock in the afternoon; good heavens! what will it be to-morrow at noon?

We had hardly begun to unpack our boxes when a man presented himself. He was a native, half bailiff, half policeman, with bare feet and a sword at his side, and made us write down, according to police regulations, our names and qualities in a register, which he appeared to hold in great veneration, demanding a legal and minute account for every column. I complied very willingly with the regulations of the colonial "Pietri," but when my august travelling companion was called upon to write down his domicile, he was tempted to put "Batavia itself;" is not every land which is not the beloved country an equally transitory domicile to the exile?

If the flowering trees of this terrestrial paradise are the most characteristic beauties of the town, the marble basins for bathing are certainly the greatest charm of a Javanese hotel. In less than ten minutes after alighting at the "Nederlanden," I had gone to the end of the colonnade, descended a few steps, and was enjoying in the whitest of basins the voluptuous delights of an abundant shower manufactured by a Malay who pumped the water by a regular movement up to the ceiling, whence it fell again to inundate me. I should have remained in my bath to all eternity if the patience of these placid Malays had not exhausted mine. Two attendants, in fact, had insisted upon following me, and crouching down some four yards off were waiting till I was pleased to condescend to require their soft towels; and beside the man who pumped, a fourth man in a red robe offered me a basket full of mangoes, red mangos-

teens, whose inside is like pink snow, and the perfumed little-known bananas.

In the evening we dined in the kiosk; round us a many-coloured noisy crowd danced under the big trees, from which hung Venetian lanterns. From time to time, amongst the red vests and green robes, a wealthy Dutchman passes languidly along in loose white garments, preceded by the light of an immensely long cigar. We are waited upon by the whole troop of Orientals of whom I spoke just now. I have a Malay to supply me with iced water, which he pours out at arm's length; there are two to change my plate; three to bring round the dishes; one carves; another is awaiting the moment for coffee. I believe if I wished for a dozen dishes, and particularly if I could call for them in the native dialect, I should give employment to the twelve men in red who stand behind my chair! What a charming effect all this variety of colours has on this beautiful evening, with a bright light shining upon them! And when, lazily stretched under the verandah, enjoying the balmy evening breeze, I call "Sapada, cassi api!" immediately one of these Arabian Nights figures, whom one is tempted to call slaves, advances from the column, at the foot of which he has been silently crouching like a statue of Buddha, and brings me to light my cigar a long match of which he has the constant care. It is made of sandal wood saw-dust glued together, and burns night and day with the most delicious perfume. I feel as if I were turning into a pasha!

As regards the dinner itself, as a North-man I must make some reservation : eight and forty different kinds of capsicums, a mountain of rice covering a microscopic atom of chicken (the anti-type of the fragment of the Australian *Dinornis*), which with a Cayenne pepper sauce, constitutes the celebrated curry ; an absence of all meat that can be cut with an ordinary knife ; an abundance of bamboo salads and chutnee ; there is a local flavour about this much appreciated by amateurs, but which in palates and digestions unaccustomed to Javanese cooking raises fiery torments, which are only increased by drinking.

11th November, 1866.—As I lay down last night on a bed already possessing the peculiarity of being made with mats instead of sheets, I was greatly surprised to find, besides the innumerable gnats imprisoned behind the mosquito net, a companion quite as remarkable. This was a long roll made of grass matting, about two yards long, and the thickness of an ordinary bolster, which awaited me laid lengthwise on the bed. It was obligingly explained to me that no inhabitant of Java will sleep without this vegetable production, which must be kept between the legs to cool the body. I was very much amused with this specimen of manners and customs ; but if it soothes the creoles with a refreshing slumber, it rouses Europeans incontrollably to a bolstering match. Besides the swarms of buzzing mosquitoes, with their impertinent stings, exasperated us by whistling their Javanese airs in our ears ; but as

the capsicums, the grass bolsters, and the mosquitoes are necessary features of the locality, I intend in a few days to make friends with them all.

Very different from Paris customs, fashionable life begins here at half past four in the morning. As soon as the first mists of a tropical dawn appear, old and young begin to be heard moving over the tiled floors in slippers, and, wrapped in floating cotton garments, hasten to the pools to enjoy the ice-cold waves. As I left them, I met a real odalisque, with jet black eyes, and of the most foreign appearance; she glided between the columns, throwing back masses of black hair which fell to the ground, and classically draped like Stratonice in rose-coloured cashmere. She seemed to us really an apparition, with her sudden changing glances, the wild swiftness of her movements, her air as of a lioness surprised, and that Indian fire in her veins which always gives so fascinating a charm. We were told that she was the daughter of a Dutch officer and of a native of Borneo.

The half-caste beauties bloom wonderfully under the sun of Java, while the unhappy Europeans, enfeebled and worn out by the heat, look pale and ghastly, and inspire one with the most profound pity. Such was my first impression, while taking my walk between four and six in the morning, the especially fashionable hour. But what particularly struck me was a military post: twenty Malays were on guard, armed with pikes and pitchforks more than nine feet long. It was explained to us that in this country there are a good many natives

suffering from mental disease: over-excited by opium, they wander over the island armed with a sword, and run through the body the first man they fall in with, in honour of the Koran. This is called running a muck. As soon as one of these men appears, the guard gives chase, encloses him between three pitchforks, and the corporal, whose rank may easily be recognised from the fact of his wearing shoes, has the honour of running through with a javelin the terrible madman. First insight into the internal government.

A morning at Batavia consists of a walk, five or six baths running, and an appetising breakfast. In the afternoon every one sleeps.

Towards six o'clock in the evening a little stir begins to be felt: hundreds of open carriages drive about. The European population, lounging bare-headed, wends its way to the Waterloo plain, where a military band is playing. We follow the stream, still delighted by the enchanting avenues and brilliant dresses. This "Longchamps" partakes completely of the character of the colony; the garrison, nine thousand men strong, is its principal ornament; more than three hundred carriages stand in the shade of the great trees; the national airs, very well played, echo loudly; and officers gallop about amongst the myriads of Javanese in holiday dress, glittering in the most brilliant Eastern finery. Imagine a tall fine-looking man, in a blue tunic, loose white trousers, high boots, large spurs, and big sword. Suppose that he will kindly open his legs to admit between them a superbly capari-

soned pony, about the size of a Newfoundland dog, and you have a truthful picture of the Javanese representatives of the armed force of all the Netherlands. The small size of the horse detracts in no wise from the greatest military virtues, and Heaven knows that the fame of this army is beyond all praise; but when a troop of Lilliputian horses, mounted by worthy companions of Gulliver, charge the enemy, it is impossible to help laughing with all one's heart.

We dined this evening with our friend M. Van Delden, the president of the Chamber of Commerce. Our agreeable companion in the stifling cabin of the 'Hero' had resumed his princely existence in his palace, amidst the peaceful charms of his delightful family circle. Luxurious pools, gardens of Armida, a verandah dining-room amidst the luxuriant foliage of blooming thickets, swarms of Indian servants in their most splendid national dress, nothing is wanting of all that can be imagined as the regal reward of industry, probity, and talent. How is it possible after the well-earned delights of such a paradise to return to a muddy, foggy street in Holland, and live there without twenty horses or four score servants? Holland is but a name to be passionately loved by these patriotic hearts; from time to time they return to see it, and to re-invigorate themselves on their native soil; but space, wealth, sunshine, authority, are wanting there to the happy inhabitants of Java, whom monopoly has here made pashas and kings, and who feel little inclined to become subjects, rate-payers, and tenants on lease again, at home!

12th November, 1866.—We follow the fashion and take an airing at five o'clock in the morning on M. Van Delden's skittish ponies. Still the same bowers, the same marvels of verdure and bloom, of perfume and foliage; still the same numbers of villas scattered about in gardens, the same movement on a hundred different canals, the same brilliant colours in this human ant-hill which moves busily about, screaming noisily like a flight of cockatoos. At nine o'clock we have already reached our fifth bath. This torrid temperature of 104° in the shade would really, I believe, burst any thermometer that was put into the sun. I braved it nevertheless with a pyramidal white cotton helmet on my head, which made me look like a whitewashed fireman. I was much puzzled with the narrow winding lanes of the old town, where the inhabitants pack themselves into their bamboo huts as we should pile up sacks of wheat in a corn market. The Malay shops are filled with calico goods and sticky eatables; the Chinese shops are of a superior kind. Here, for example, is the stall of a Chinese watchmaker. The proprietor's plaited tail is the sole garment which appears on his immensely fat body. He holds a magnifying glass in his left eye by a contraction of the eyebrow which contorts his features into a horrible grimace, and this semi-nude jeweller is audaciously handling a Breguet watch, and seems very proud of being able to take the Paris workmanship so cleverly to pieces. His neighbour sells monkeys, his opposite neighbour innumerable preparations of capsicums in

innumerable saucers piled one upon another. Everywhere a putrid and disgusting smell reigns. The sea breeze brings great whiffs of it, exhaled from the mangrove trees and poisonous shrubs which cover the shore. The advancing tide swells their knotted, twisted, porous roots; in a few hours they increase some inches in diameter; then the ebb leaves them exposed on the unhealthy mud; the sun pours down, evaporates and dries them up; a line of yellowish clouds, of pestilential mists, forms itself, and remains for a moment suspended, waiting to be carried off by the wind, and then, woe to the coast where the caprice of the atmosphere may direct it!

It is these deadly miasmas which have given to the old town of Batavia that general reputation for unhealthiness which made you fear for us when we left home. And in fact, it is impossible to count the numbers who have fallen victims there since the occupation of the place. I was speaking of this subject with an agreeable acquaintance. "Oh!" said he, "before the period when we retreated from the shores to found the new town, people died like flies in old Batavia, it was actual poisoning for every human being; but now, what does it signify? no one lives there but Chinese or Malays!" This saying, anything but philanthropic, recalled to my mind a certain correspondence in the last Mexican war. Having enumerated the disasters from yellow fever on the coast, and given an account of the movement of the troops into the interior, the letter said: "But families may feel re-

assured now, there are none but sailors on the coast!" The families of the French sailors must have been about as much comforted as those of the natives are here. Notwithstanding the pure air of the new town, we have just had a terrible example of the consequence of imprudence. One of our neighbours at table, who had eaten too freely of the juicy pine-apples at dessert yesterday evening, looked a little pale at the mid-day breakfast—at three o'clock, he was dead! It is the only thing which is done quickly in these tropical latitudes!

Hardly is the hour of our siesta over before we sit down to write under our verandah. Immediately we are besieged by some fifty Chinese or Malays, wanting to sell us neckties or handkerchiefs, French photographs and military sketches. I drive them away, they return; I threaten them, they spread out a hundred new things, this one crying up his trousers, another his eau de Cologne, a third his monkeys. Determined to await the end of my letter, they are at this moment crouching down in the full sun ten paces from us, evidently hoping that I shall be in a more conciliatory disposition presently. In the evening we were roused by a fire. A hundred and eighty houses—reed huts—in the old town were blazing like a lot of lucifer matches. What quantities of vermin must have been roasted!

13th November, 1866.—We might have expected this! The captain of the 'Hero,' our neighbour in this corridor, turned pale yesterday evening, and passed

the night prostrate on the ground very sick, and groaning. We ourselves have paid the necessary tribute of new arrivals, and our interiors are in a pitiable state. If we can preserve our cheerfulness, we are safe from that phantom of cholera—and Javanese cholera—which takes fright if it does not inspire it.

Here, too, is something to restore us—the pure air of the mountains inland. A charming letter from the Governor-General for the time being informs us that, “political considerations not permitting him to offer to a prince in exile the honours due to a French prince, he yet begs to be allowed to treat him as the grandson of a king.” He sends us a circular passport, a most rare and valuable favour, for the whole island, and even for the so-called imperial territories, where, under Dutch protection, the Sultans of Sourakarta and Djokakarta reign; notice is given to all the residents and native princes in the island, and the government post horses are put at the Prince’s service gratuitously. This is a piece of good fortune which delights us and fills us with the most lively gratitude.

Change being recommended for those who feel the enervating effect of this fiery climate, we have not refused the Resident of Batavia, M. Hooegeveen’s, kind invitation. At six o’clock in the evening his state carriage came to fetch us. Four outrunners, all dressed in white, carry long white horses’ tails with which they flick away the flies from our team; they make good use of their legs, each running by the side of his pony and effectually chasing the flies. We gallop and they run,

such is the custom here. In half an hour we arrive at the palace. A regiment of servants are on the steps, turbans, sashes, arms, all the splendid figures of Oriental scenery stand out brilliantly on the marble. The Resident receives the Prince most cordially; then come the general in command, the colonels of artillery, the civil engineers, and, finally, the sultan and sultana of one of the principalities of Borneo. The husband is a stunted little old man, wrinkled and rheumatic, furiously chewing a paste made of lime and betel nut, which blackens the teeth and makes the gums bleed, and which, stuck between the teeth and the lower lip, swells the latter, by nature hanging, and so increases a hideous and deformed swelling.

But the sultana is charming. She is a little person, young, and with bright eyes, and returns the greeting of the young Europeans with perfect grace. Her dress consists of a mantle of blue and yellow silk. A red and white scarf, passed across her shoulder, covers her bosom, and is kept in its place by a brooch of twelve intertwined crescents made of diamonds of the island. It is the prettiest jewel I ever saw. A red turban with a diamond ornament at the side, frames the smiling expressive bronze head.

As for us, whilst sauntering amongst the white arcades, amongst strange groups of soldiers, servants, incense burners, and cigar lighters, we had the pleasure of arranging a crocodile hunt with the good-natured resident.

10th November, 1866.—Beyond the repeated siestas

which are the great secret of happiness when one is so near the line; beyond the lounging and bathing, and the delicious cups of coffee, everything is a labour under this sun! All the same, I have closed my mail bag for Europe and paid the postage on it; no mere form of politeness, I assure you. Seven-and-twenty shillings for postage have I paid this morning.

I had almost forgotten our visit to the museum, of which the Resident did the honours to the Prince. Besides the fly-flapping outrunners, M. Hoogeveen is accompanied by the gilt-umbrella-bearing outrunner, and two cigar lighters, who trot behind us brandishing the sandal-wood match, that Vestal fire always kept up for the official "manillas." The museum is magnificent, and so curious as to be quite unintelligible to the traveller who is not well versed in Sanscrit, Javanese, Sunda, Bali, and Hindoo divinities, their big stomachs, slits of eyes, and humped backs, with double faces and half a dozen arms and legs kicking about, silver chickens with five legs, ancient lamps and tom-toms, with which we produced the most astonishing noises, and I know not what besides. It is a perfect nightmare.

The 'Hero' starts to-day for our dear Australia; and we intend, when we confide our letters to her, to wish her a fair wind, and take the customary farewell breakfast on board.¹ Poor ship, in which we had run, so

¹ We had been lucky in seizing this opportunity for Torres. I learn by letters from Australia that the difficulties and dangers of the route have determined the Australian Governments to give up the idea of establishing the line studied by the 'Hero.'

many risks! I see it still clearing by a few yards only the coral reef on which we threatened a thousand times to go to pieces! I see it lost for fifteen hours after passing Bali, when a dangerous current carried us to the north-east, while we were steering west-north-west. And she is getting her steam up to start again, and put to flight the flotillas of pirogues manned by cannibals! Whatever happens, her last deed here is a good one, for she is carrying off a poor invalid dying under the tropical sun; a mere skeleton from consumption, the poor man is going to seek for health amongst the beauties of New South Wales, or the cool breezes of Tasmania. If he lands alive, the marks of sympathy and cordiality which all strangers there receive will surely save him.

As we bade farewell to our old iron boat, where we had been so uncomfortable, and for which we yet had a kindly feeling, two guns were fired: a black smoke appeared in the distance. The Singapore mail, the 'Cores de Vries,' has arrived; our hearts beat loudly, for there was due on board her a young Prince returning from a glorious expedition. We went to meet her in a pirogue, and before even she had anchored, we had leapt on board. There with indescribable feelings we affectionately welcomed the Duke of Alençon. We were permitted to meet then, more than nine thousand miles from home, to talk about our belongings, to relate our adventures, our sorrows, and our hopes!

The Duke of Alençon, a lieutenant in the Spanish army, was in command of the artillery during an

expedition against the pirates and the natives of Mindanão (the Philippines). During the fatigues of this terrible campaign, under a fiery sun, and amongst pestilential marshes, he had a hundred times narrowly escaped epidemics and ambushes. But we could not extract from his modesty any account of the brilliant attack on fort Sanditan, which had already made a good deal of noise at Batavia: he had been one of the first to scale the palisades of the fort in the face of the grapeshot still fired by the Indians inside, who killed an officer at his side; he sprang upon the guns, and made himself master of twelve pieces. The Governor-General gave him, as the "*spolia opima*" due to his valour, the arms and tunic of the Indian chief who was killed in the engagement.

The 'Cores de Vries' presented the most singular appearance. The deck was crowded with over two hundred pilgrims returning from Mecca, in glittering dresses. Their radiant and inspired look, their air of majesty and yet of contrition, expressed all the fervour of these believers, who could not be discouraged by the expenses, the fatigues, and privations, of so long and arduous a pilgrimage.

CHAPTER XVI.

CROCODILE AND RHINOCEROS HUNT.

A pirogue upset by a crocodile — Journey up the country — All the natives prostrate before the whites — Well-mannered apes — A Javanese prince and his dancing-girls — His tribe beat up a rhinoceros for us — His three favourite ducks.

18th November, 1866.—M. Hoogeveen, the amiable resident, carries off our merry French party this morning before four o'clock, reinforced by seven or eight sportsmen of the country. Everything has been arranged for this official crocodile hunt; carriages with four horses are ready to take us to the quay; a gunboat to carry us out of the harbour, along the coast, and as far as the mouth of a river, which falls into the sea from amongst clumps of mangrove trees; boats belonging to the royal navy, Malay pirogues, &c. When I saw all these elaborate arrangements, I was tempted to suppose that a few crocodiles might have been trapped the day before, by order of an Asiatic master of the hunt, as roe-deer are trapped for shooting in France; but the result proved that crocodiles are not so easily caught by cajolery as the game at home.

At six in the morning, the gunboat anchors against the bar of the river. We distributed ourselves in the pirogues and kept our eyes open to search the long

grasses which covered the muddy bank, and to fathom the slimy yellow water; but nothing appeared. We rowed up and down more than twenty tributary streams, our pirogue gliding silently along, thanks to its paddles, under the shade of thick clumps of venomous water plants, where hundreds of serpents, some dark green, some of a yellowish blue colour, were wriggling and hiding themselves; some, keeping their heads two feet above the surface of the water, swam proudly across as if to defy us. Towards ten o'clock, when we were beginning to feel roasted by the fierce rays of the sun, and the disgusting effluvium of the marshes was making itself felt on temples and throat, some air bubbles made their appearance on the surface four paces from us. All attention was attracted, a crocodile must be breathing there. While the old sportsmen were making the champagne corks fly, we were anxiously hoping for the appearance of the monster. Eighty paces from us a slight eddy appears, concentric waves rise, and a long black serrated ridge (I suppose twenty or five-and-twenty feet in length) appears like an arrow on the surface of the water, then dives down to re-appear a little further off. In spite of the awkward angle for firing, the distance, and the hardness of his coat, we fired. Whether from simple curiosity, or real pain, the crocodile lifted himself straight out of the water till we could see his legs, and then — our companions declare that he lies dead at the bottom of the water, the received account of every crocodile who has been missed! But we who

are accustomed to count no game as killed except what is brought home, are inclined to believe that he has some happy days yet in store for him.

I suspect the horrid brute of having wished to take vengeance for his scratch; for while we were reloading our guns, his great jaw, garnished with a frightful number of teeth, opened suddenly to snap at the bow of a pirogue following ours, and manned by two Indians. The most active seizes a copper harpoon, more than two feet long, fastened to a long rod of iron-wood, and thrusts it deep into the monster's mouth. The point causes such agony to his tonsils that he lashes his tail furiously. The pirogue is thrown into the air like a balloon, and the two Malays who have taken this perilous involuntary somersault fall back into the water and regain the shore with a speed quickened by terror. The crocodile who had broken the iron-wood rod short off with his teeth, but had got the harpoon still caught in his jaw, makes a great leap into the air, his tail raised, his body exposed, so that for a moment we saw the whole animal. Our guns once re-loaded, no such favourable opportunity occurred again. We caught sight of crocodiles about fifteen times this morning, and I imagine there must have been five or six of these great brutes in our waters. "Fire at the eye!" we were told each time, as if it were an easy thing at a distance of eighty paces and an angle of four or five degrees, with the whole population of a village assembled on the banks, so that a ball missing its aim might have killed ten natives standing in a line

with our wary prey. It appears that at low water the crocodiles lie on the bank wallowing in the mud, and then nothing is easier than to place a ball in a vital part. The difficulties of our boat hunt with its excitements and dangers have given us a very pleasant morning's amusement. Let us hope that next time we may have as much enjoyment, less sun, and more luck.

Towards noon, the sun having driven all the amphibious creatures to the bottom of the water, we beat a retreat, already somewhat stupified with the intensity of the heat, and dizzy with the unhealthy smells. The gunboat carried us westward to the mouth of the river "Ankee." There we got into a "prahu," a pirogue made from the hollowed trunk of a tree, the stern rudely sculptured. Thirty Malays, singing and trotting along the bank, harnessed themselves to a long towing rope, and our barque rapidly cleaves the warm muddy waters. Our nearly naked tugs seemed nothing daunted by the long grasses, into which they threw themselves at every bend, that our speed might not be relaxed. Instead of a towing path, they have to skirt the jungle, and are often obliged to swim over the streams that cross their road. We are on our way thus to the Chinese captain's villa. This gentleman of the Celestial Empire, who has come to meet us, is a personage of high importance apparently. He is appointed by the Dutch government and acknowledged by all his countrymen in the island, and is at once minister-plenipotentiary, police magis-

trate, judge or counsel in every cause in which his countrymen are concerned ; and as these form a very important financial and social element in the colony, he has no sinecure. During the passage, one of our natives sprang at one bound upon this official, and put back into the boat the end of his hair. "Take care, Mr. Mandarin, pull your tail out of the water; a cayman might drag you down by it."

Breakfast was served under the shade of a pagoda, but we were half dead from the heat. The wines of Europe were imbibed, and some few heads were the worse for them, cheerfully so, however. A stream of sporting anecdotes began to flow, and one must have spent eight hours' crocodile hunting to be able to believe such a collection of stories, over which we went into fits of laughter. Notwithstanding the excellent liquors, I could not refrain from sending a native servant to climb to the top of a cocoa-nut tree, where he got for me two green cocoa-nuts, the delicious milk of which I drank. Soon a party of Malays ran up, and, pointing with their fingers, showed us a crocodile digesting his dinner on the opposite bank while we were breakfasting. Baron Bache, an old African officer, travelling with the Duke of Alençon, and a first-rate shot, fired and placed a ball in the middle of the brute's back. He plunged into the water, leaving a stain of blood where he sank. "He is dead!" we cried joyfully. But not at all; he reappeared further off, holding one foot up. Our fire was concentrated on him, and some bubbles stained with blood rising from the bottom of

the river were the last signs we saw of the monster. I must renounce, therefore, the long-cherished hope of carrying home with me to my family a black skin twenty-five feet long, to hang upon the walls.

The resident's carriages brought us back to Batavia by land, and half an hour later, at about three o'clock, we were to start again. Our exciting amphibious hunt was only a sort of introduction to get us into training. We have settled to begin to-day our journey into the interior of Java, which we intend to last for about a month if this burning atmosphere has not taken the edge off our Australian energies.

The entire island is traversed with splendid roads; relays are ready at every point; caravanseries placed at regular intervals; in short, in this supposed wild country we are to travel by post as one did in France in the good old times. Our excellent friend, M. Van Delden, has lent us two Indian post-chaises—great baskets covered with a white roof, with seats in front and behind. Our luggage is necessarily reduced to its simplest form. For my share, my choice lies between the blue linen blouse of the French sportsman, the fireman's helmet and boots intended to preserve one from serpents, on the one hand; and a black coat and crush hat for the sultans on the other; all is well stowed away in our carriages.

As our knowledge of the Malay language is limited to the power of asking for fire, water, and rice, we thought it would not be very prudent to adventure ourselves thus into the country for a long journey; our

party is therefore augmented by Ak-Hem, a Malay sailor from the 'Hero,' who has partly forgotten his native language in Australia, and who has not learnt English there, but who will nevertheless be a powerful auxiliary to our French company.

The bells of the eight ponies are ringing before the verandah, whips crack, and we start off at full gallop. Besides the postilion, we have two Malay whips, who take it in turns to trot by the horses' sides with marvellous agility, and yelling without ceasing. When the team is going full speed, they climb up each on to a step at the back seat, and content themselves with goading on the ponies with shouts of their shrill voices. As soon as the speed begins to slacken, they get down, rush to the front, and beat the poor little beasts unmercifully. Their dress consists of a coloured scarf tied round the loins, and a large bellglass-shaped hat, of scarlet and yellow. I delight in watching them, they are so active and robust, so muscular and so full of energy.

We have passed through Tandjong and Tjimanjis, and changed horses four times in the three hours and a quarter we took in getting over the eight-and-forty miles which divided Batavia from Buitenzorg—which may be translated "Sans Souci." The road is delightful; it is like an avenue in a great park, shaded by the most splendid verdant trees. There are vistas into the valleys where admirably cultivated plantations of rice, betelnut, and sugar-canes meet our eyes; the golden blades of the rice

plantations are almost ripe, and flocks of argils and white cranes, of blue, green, and yellow birds, are settling down to plunder them. From time to time there are most picturesque scarecrows set up by the natives; bamboos, thirty feet high, are firmly planted in the ground, and tied together at the bottom, forming apparently a single trunk, while at the top they open out into the shape of a horn. Here a little hut of banana leaves is made, a narrow seat which a boy can climb up into and perch himself in, to pull a thousand strings which radiate from this point to every corner of the field like the threads of a gigantic spider's web. Leaves are fastened to these which the Malay sentinel can keep in motion by a turn of his hand, making them dance like puppets. A good many audacious birds make their way in notwithstanding, and peck about under the shadow of this Asiatic roost, which is rather like the "Swiss Family Robinson's" tree, and whence there is a fairylike view over the whole extent of the harvest fields of coffee, cloves, vanilla, and cinnamon, interspersed with islets of palms, nutmegs, and tulip trees.

The telegraph posts dotted along the road are nothing but cotton trees, whose bare branches only here and there spotted with large white flakes have so curious an effect. Characteristic trees of these latitudes, yielding of themselves to an indolent and backward population the admirable raw material which we work up for them at Manchester, Rouen, and Mulhouse, they here hold a plurality of offices and lend their aid

in the service of electricity. To foreign travellers they seem besides to give the first notification of the Dutch dominion, each tree being marked with a registered number, as if to show its connection with the minutest system of regulations that exists in the world. Everything here, indeed, seems ruled by the wand of an invisible fairy. At each stage the travellers and their whole train are sheltered under a graceful vaulted roof, made of bamboos, and covered with large dried leaves, and they are waited on with respectful punctuality. In less than four minutes a new postilion has mounted, a fresh team is pawing the ground and longing to be off, and new outrunners are cracking their whips in front of the crowd assembled to sell fruit and cigars.

But the thing which has struck us most since leaving the outskirts of Batavia, and which must certainly arise not from a fairy's wand, but from the recollection of thousands of blows from the "kurbash," is the attitude of the Malay country people. A white man no sooner appears than all the natives crouch down upon their heels in token of veneration and respect. Not one man has stood upright during the whole length of the thickly peopled road we have traversed at full speed. They seemed to fall to right and left, as the dust was raised by our flying horses, as if they had been card figures knocked down at our approach. Good heavens! if the abuse of influence on the part of the white men is in proportion to the excess of servility on the part of the black, what bounds can stop the rulers whose subjects, already in an attitude of the lowest

abasement, dare not raise their eyes towards them! What a capital country population for a government to have to deal with! If ever the system of official candidature should be exiled from fair France,

“*Dî meliora piis, erroremque hostibus illum,*

it ought certainly to take refuge here.

Our talk is of France, of Australia—of Japan! We are so delighted at the increase to our party during the last three days, meeting the Duke of Alençon again at the end of the world with all well, that we make the most wonderful noise.

Buitenzorg is the Versailles of Batavia. The splendours of the government palace are only equalled by the wonders of nature, which make of it a paradise of delight, with all the comforts of Europe. But this place is considered as a “town in the interior,” and to reach it a special passport from the government is needed. Even the Governor’s physician, we are told, is obliged to renew his passport every time he leaves the capital to visit his august patient. We regretted being only able to write our names down at the door of his Excellence, Mr. Prins, the Governor for the time being. The sorrow on all faces showed us the attachment felt to this excellent man, who was taken dangerously ill to-day.

19th November, 1866.—You know that the botanical garden at Buitenzorg has the reputation of being the finest in the world. Thousands of dazzling and exqui-

sitely perfumed plants are not here confined in a narrow space as in the conservatories at Paris or Kew. This is a conservatory measuring several square miles, with the blue of a tropical sky for a roof, lakes for fountains, hills for terraces, and high-roads for passages! The learned director of the garden, M. Teyemann, who for six-and-thirty years has reigned as king over this paradise, was our guide through the well-ordered labyrinth and beneath the leafy arcades. A thousand Greco-Latin names were sounded in our ears. There the strangest orchids, from the palest pink to the deepest crimson, were waving amongst the creepers as if in imitation of the black monkeys, who hang from them by their tails, and break them unmercifully; here, islands of many-coloured water-lilies rise above the blue waves. Further on, a great copper-coloured fish springs too rashly out of the water to snap at a sparkling butterfly as large as my hand, and falls back upon, without even bending, a gigantic leaf of the *Victoria Regia*. He struggles like a demon in holy water, but he will never escape: the curved edge of the floating leaf will hold him imprisoned till he dies. Imagine to yourself a hundred of these beautiful green leaves, measuring six feet across, spread over the lake like the vessels of a fleet in the roadstead. Then come walks bordered entirely with poisonous trees, of which one berry or one drop of juice would send a Christian out of the world in ten minutes and a native in fifteen. The primary source which fills the jars with cabalistic signs upon them in the apothecaries' shops

all the world over is here before our eyes. It is the avenue of poisonings, of torture and crimes; but how much sickness has been healed and pain soothed by the same means!

We saw in this garden a whole menagerie-orchard of animal leaves. I think their scientific name is phyllia. You can conceive nothing more curious or deceptive to the eye. One could swear that this delicate green blade, which has the texture of a leaf, its denticulations and veins, is a leaf fallen from the great jasmine which cools and perfumes the air. But not at all. Suddenly this leaf sets off running, another follows, and we see them no more. In the director's laboratory we took up a magnifying glass and compared the phyllia with some leaves. It was impossible to detect a difference, and my mind is still confounded at this phenomenon.

We were interrupted in this work by a party of most courteous monkeys. Accustomed no doubt to visitors, they honoured us by shaking hands, standing upright and quite firmly on their hind legs. Was it a malicious delusion or a simple truth? was it false shame for an imaginary relationship, or real remorse for the follies of our first ancestors? But certain college porters presented themselves to my mind, and as I left this strange group, I had to stop myself from saying, "I think I have met these people somewhere already."

On the other hand, I had never seen and was perfectly charmed with the dwarf-deer of Java, sometimes called the mouse-deer. A herd of them were skipping

about in the bushes, from six to ten inches high. They have exactly the same chestnut coat, small tail, erect head, slender legs and hoofs, as one of our stags of ten seen through a reversed telescope. It would require a heart of iron to kill one of these charming Lilliputian creatures, which seem like a graceful caprice of nature. I spare you the museum with its collection of specimens of colonial produce, diamonds from Borneo, copper from Sumatra, and silver from Timor.

Towards four o'clock in the afternoon, Colonel Rappard, the Governor's aide-de-camp, took us to Battou-Toulis-Cocabatou, a sacred wood held in veneration by the natives. A goddess is supposed to have drawn some hieroglyphics on a flat stone lying on the ground; the impression of her footsteps has remained graven on the rock, then the earth opening (the fissure still exists) swallowed her up like a pill. Such is the legend. We found there several men in charge, offerings of fruit and incense, Etruscan-shaped lamps, filled with cocoa-nut oil, and burning night and day. The natives were prostrated before them with their faces on the earth. Further on, amongst a number of bamboo kiosks constructed on piles, in a valley full of pink-flowering lotuses, a crowd of women and children, profiting by the breeze, were flying some kites.

The hero of the evening was a grey ape of the wa-wou or gibbon species, who came down from the thicket of creepers, which overhung our pool, to play with us under the verandah. He was the most playful and amusing creature and a capital mimic. He walked

with the greatest ease, never once putting his fore paws to the ground, and quite ready to walk arm in arm with us like a reasonable being. But at the end of an hour and a half of play, we received a hailstorm of dates thrown from the tops of the neighbouring trees. His companions were calling him, and he scrambled and frisked back again to them.

20th November, 1866, *Tjiandjour*. We are advancing further into the country, and the landscape becomes more varied. We begin, too, to ascend, and our little horses feel it terribly. When they come to a stop, the people rush up, push the wheels, and exhaust themselves with throwing volleys of stones and sticks, till our team resumes its way. But we have now arrived at the foot of the great mountain, the Megamendong. Our ponies are replaced by ten buffaloes, each pair goaded on by a laughing driver. These buffaloes form a singular team, with their long black horns, slow pace, and powerful odour! The greyish pink colour of their skins reminds one of little pigs of a month old. They detest Europeans, will stare at them with outstretched necks, and seldom fail to sprinkle them with a sticky saliva which they throw from their flattened nostrils.

This sudden change has converted our rapid carriage of heretofore into a slow dawdling waggon. We mount under a leaden sun the 4780 feet of the Megamendong, advancing deeper into the virgin forest. The scenery becomes more and more tangled, wild, and majestic. The ridge of the hill is only ten feet wide. Here we leave

the coast behind us, and our view extends over the interior. Before us is the beautiful province of Preanger. It is a singular sight that of these sharp-pointed hills, covered to the very summit with the richest vegetation, with their deep blue shadows, and distances stretching further than the eye can reach; then the rice plantations dotted over terraces forming amphitheatres in every hollow, like the cells of a honeycomb. Suddenly a storm appears, the wind carries it below us, and for half an hour it hides from us all the valleys that we had been admiring. It was like a curtain falling after an extravaganza; but it soon disappeared, and the panorama was restored to us greener than before, while a thousand perfumes reach us till now unrevealed. We ask ourselves if we are really not dreaming in this wonderful country of Java. The rapidity of our descent of the Megamendong reminded me of the diligence coming down Mont Cenis; the drag of our carriage was broken to pieces, and we found ourselves in the valley much quicker than we could have wished. Our halting-place is Tjiandjour, eight-and-forty miles from Buitenzorg, a charming village buried in the shade of bamboos; the streets are as well swept as in Holland, and, as it is a market-day, there is as much liveliness as at the most animated of fairs. Only yesterday, thinking of all the worthy Javanese crouching down as we passed by, I thought they must certainly take us for the Governor. But there can be no mistake now; we are white men, and that suffices to make all heads bend. The further we advance into the interior the more

inconceivable does the servility become. Yesterday only the people who crossed our path bowed down to the ground immediately; to-day, from the depths of the rice plantations, 100 or 150 yards off, our presence is the signal for a general abasement. Worse still, as they crouch upon their heels, they turn their backs to us, and keep their eyes fixed upon the ground! It was of no use to make friendly signs to them to induce them to rise, they only prostrated themselves further. Lately we passed a gang of some 300 coolies, who like the water-carriers at home, carry their loads at the two ends of a stick. Here it was a long bamboo, with two sacks of coffee upon it. The poor men had carried so many that the bamboo had hollowed a positive furrow on their bare shoulders. At our approach down went the sacks upon the ground, and the coolies on their heels! Further on, we passed some Malay women, with chocolate complexions, but finely made, their sole dress a cotton scarf tied round the waist, and carrying their children astride on their hips; and here, again, down went the children on the ground, and the women on their knees! Our entry into Tjiandjour, therefore, passes all description; the streets were cleared, everyone collecting on the footpaths. The mothers who were hunting for small game in the fair heads of their daughters dressed as in Eden; the cooks who were busy fanning the little chafing dishes in which savoury balls were frying: all left their employments, and brought their astonished faces and gaping mouths to the front of the houses. There they crouch down and

crowd together, determined to see us at any cost, and a good many even hold on tight to the balcony.

We are staying with the Assistant-Resident. Here, again, I have not seen a single servant stand erect before me, and decidedly we may say to ourselves once for all: "Java is the court of the Great Mogul, and I am the Great Mogul; so can you be if you come here!"

We had expressed a desire to visit the palace of one of the native princes; in his absence we were received by his grand vizier, a tall Indian wearing a turban, a long embroidered robe, a yellow skirt, and polished shoes. But what a disappointment awaited us! The long dreamed of dancing girls, so vaunted in Europe, danced on the terrace to the music of single-stringed violins, and flutes with only one hole, which they accompanied with nasal caterwaulings. They were dressed with the utmost simplicity; but dress here must be understood in the reverse sense. They twisted themselves about as they danced, as if in violent pain. I have a very small idea of the prince of these parts. But perhaps he is blind—and deaf.

21st November, 1866, *Bandong*.—In proportion as we advance further into the country, the clothing of the population diminishes to the most extraordinary extent, and the number of our ponies increases. As we arrived at the top of the ridge which commands the wild ravine of Tjisokkan, a native chief rode up towards us at a gallop. He carried an old-fashioned "kriss," and wore

a scarlet sash and skirt, and an umbrella-hat in stripes of gold and silver. He has summoned his whole tribe for our service, and they await us now thirty paces off, sitting on their heels. They have to get us down a frightfully steep pitch between two hills covered with creepers. Our horses are quickly unharnessed, and a long rope of buffalo-hide and plaited canes is fastened to the back of our carriage. More than 200 natives cling on to it, the extreme end being held by a crowd of little boys and girls without a scrap of clothing on. Then forward we go, and propelled by its own weight, the carriage descends the giddy height, the great human serpent using its utmost efforts to hold it back. Some hold fast, others fall; all shout with the whole strength of their lungs; great drops stream from their bronzed nervous bodies under the terrible sun; the force of our own impulse carries us across the torrent over a covered bridge. Another tribe brings its buffaloes to our aid, and the counter-scarp of the ravine is scaled. Then while the wheelers kick, a trace breaks, and the leaders fall under the shafts, while the whole population push on the wheels, we take up our guns and bring down some splendid birds. It is the best way of preserving our patience! At Tjipadalarang, we met a Javanese prince dressed in pale green silk, and two princesses in pink sashes spangled with gold. We were quite confused at seeing them all alight to bow to us, but they could not understand our polite excuses. At Radjamendala we found a new tribe drawn up; the forced service seemed only to cause good-natured smiles on all

these worthy plum-coloured faces. Arrived at the bottom of the hill, a ferry-boat takes us across a broad river, with villages on either bank under the shade of banana trees. The ferry-boat is composed of two pirogues joined together, with their heads turned up stream, and supporting a platform; two cane ropes lashed to cocoa-nut trees on both banks assist their passage backwards and forwards. The whole construction is light, solid, and graceful.

Arrival at Bandong.—This town is the capital of one of the most beautiful provinces in Java. Some hundreds of thousands of Javanese live here in patriarchal style, protected, governed, and kept in order by half a dozen Dutchmen and a native prince (on the sick list). This native prince bears the title of regent. He is of an ancient race, but appointed to this post by the Dutch government, who allow him (I am told) 8000*l.* a year, besides the local revenues, which often amount to 16,000*l.* He is absolutely under the orders of the Resident (the Dutch magistrate established here); but to the natives he is a real king—a “sultan”—before whom all prostrate themselves.

The Regent had most amiably sent a courier yesterday to inform the Duc de Penthievre that he would be happy to receive him, and I am now writing from his palace. Imagine an immense caravansery, with cool rooms hung with matting, and a swarm of Indians in splendid red dresses to wait upon us. The Regent has an amiable countenance; but his limbs are as full of

rheumatism as his kriss is of diamonds, a splendid weapon which he carries across his back, passed through the belt of his skirt. This coloured skirt contrasts oddly with his polished shoes, vest of European cloth, and blue and gold turban. The Prince can only speak the Malay language. M. Philippeau, a neighbour, therefore, most kindly came to act as interpreter. Some gentle hints procured us a promise of a dance of bayadères in the evening. We spoke of hunting; and a rhinoceros is promised us for to-morrow. The Regent is all kindness for us, and tells us that he puts at our service everything in his house that can please us.

Under our windows is a little lake, where all the young ladies of the neighbourhood come to amuse themselves towards sunset. As soon as they catch sight of a white man, they take flight like frightened doves, skipping through the grass, and hiding under the shadow of the bananas, one leaf of which serves to clothe them.

It is impossible to count the crowd of attendants that surround us. The palace is like a hive, in which they are the bees, but not working ones. The courts and passages are choked up with them. It is true that they cannot cost much to feed, for they are perfectly content to be stuffed with rice like chickens. I counted seventeen Indians waiting upon our two servants at luncheon! You may double the number for dinner, and then think what it is when the native prince sits down to the same table with the French princes!

After a drive in our host's carriages—a drive during

which those humble earth worms, the subjects of the all-powerful "Raden-Adiepatie-Wiranatta-Kousouma," bit the dust as soon as his scarlet outrunners appeared, like the outrunners of our old kings—we sat down to a sumptuous dinner, and then the music began. Two hundred and thirty-eight bells, ten tom-toms, sixteen pairs of cymbals, twenty single-stringed violins, and as many drums: such is the "gammelang," the celebrated orchestra of the Regent. It has cost about 1,000*l*. The musicians, crouching down, strum in harmony, led by the majestic movements of their chief. And to speak the truth, strange as the music is, it is not a mere row; there are soft passages which lull one as if swinging in a hammock, to be awoke suddenly by a peal of thunder.

This is only the overture, and the play is to come. It is eight o'clock in the evening; from the depths of the great dusky avenues streams of people flock in; the Regent has condescended to permit his subjects to share in the amusements of the great; some new dancing girls are to make their appearance, and everybody climbs the cocoa-nut trees to attend a first night here. As Moses took the Israelites across the Red Sea dry shod, a vizier here precedes us, and with a sign clears the way for us through the sea of human beings who crowd the principal court, and we take our places in front of the balcony of the seraglio.

Nota bene: The seraglio is a separate building from ours, and is guarded by sentinels with bayonets at the ends of their muskets.

A small door opens, and four bayadères appear, shrinking and yet excited, with wild eyes and trembling movements. On their heads they wear a quantity of little gold wings, a sort of gold-spangled mane like a mythological dragon's helmet; a golden girdle, quantities of bracelets and rings, a piece of red silk rolled round them like a tight-clinging tunic—such is their charming dress. They are from twelve to fourteen years old, and the Regent possesses eight all alike. When he is tired of them, he gives them in marriage to his friends in regular order, which is considered as a high honour.

At last, then, we see those Eastern dancers, of whom we were shown yesterday only the caricature. They are here in all their splendour before their lord and master. But this is not a dance! Accompanied by an air which has but one burden—the peculiarity of Asiatic music—they execute without moving from one spot a series of slow oscillating movements and graceful attitudes, a study of plastic art to exhibit their beautiful figures in the most becoming positions, and to show off their grace and suppleness. Sometimes they provoke one another to battle, like tragic actresses, and, seizing a golden bow, draw it with as marvellous a grace as the fabled Amazons of old, and let fly feather arrows, whose airy lightness they vie with. Then they kneel, as if in prayer, and one of the musicians sings a plaintive air, accompanied by a single violin. Then again the music becomes quicker and louder; and, bridleing up with all the pride of the birds of Venus,

they play with long peacock's feathers and spread them as the peacock spreads his tail. But at the moment of the greatest excitement, at a sign from the master, they return to the seraglio, like the visions of a dream. A general good night follows: the spectators drop in clusters from their airy seats in the tops of the cocoa-nut trees; the crowd disperses; a patrol arrives to double the guard over the seraglio; the torches are extinguished; and through the delightful stillness of the night, by the glimmer of a blue light escaping from the women's apartments, a single female voice seems to murmur the lullaby of the song of the bow!

22nd November, 1866.—At five o'clock this morning we started on a rhinoceros hunt. The chiefs of the neighbouring tribes were summoned last night to the palace, and reported that there was a herd of rhinoceroses in the ravines of Tjisitoe, eighteen miles from here. We made our way to the ground by winding paths, our future field of battle gradually unfolding before our eyes. It is a wild ravine hollowed in a semi-circle, I suppose about nine miles from end to end. We are in the centre of the curve on the outer side, overlooking an almost impenetrable gorge covered with thick jungle. A mass of grass and reeds more than fifteen feet high, a jungle is to men what a field of thickly growing ripe corn is to hares. Beyond a few narrow paths, there is no possibility of advancing more than a few feet except by breaking down branches and rushing headlong in. We are accompanied by

several beaters armed with flint guns, which can at least make some noise, but which at first appear more dangerous to us than to the wild beasts. The chiefs carry off their men silently to our left, making a great circuit to double and surround the ravine. From the height where we stand we command the narrowest part of the gorge, a little glade with a stream running through it. Is there any chance that the huge creatures will take this road? Nobody knows, everyone hopes so. Shrill cries along the whole line announce that the beaters have set to work; the row of sportsmen get agitated; we are ready. In case of extremity, I have added a bayonet to my rifle, and have loaded with the most conscientious attention, for there is considerable danger. It seems that when the animal charges, he can crush one in a moment with one blow of his great feet, which are more than eighteen inches wide. At the end of a quarter of an hour, two shots, fired by the beaters, are heard. The creature has been seen! Immediately after, what was our astonishment at seeing not merely the whole line in disorder, but the heads of all our men above the cocoa-nut trees! With wonderful unanimity they had all given way, and climbing one after the other with the agility of monkeys (of whose nature they evidently partake), they had deserted the ground to take refuge in the golden boughs where only birds are generally to be seen. A hundred paces from us was a little party of chiefs. Their attendants with their hatchets made notches in great trees that it was impossible otherwise to scale

and in a very short time the Javanese aristocracy were in a position to keep up telegraphic communication with their gallant followers! For us, we determined to hold our ground, and to reserve our agility to fall upon the brute and meet him as he passed by, and we vainly endeavoured by signals to set in movement again our climbing escort.

"From the heights of these cocoa-nut trees, 400 cowards observe us!" exclaimed one of our party to calm the fury of the others. But as ill-luck would have it, the chiefs began to shout in stentorian tones to the beaters who were 800 yards from them, calling to them to come down, but taking good care not to set the example. The inevitable result of this intolerable noise ensued. The party of three rhinoceroses scaled the mountain in front of us, putting to flight two or three groups of natives who were literally hidden in the long grass.

At first we saw nothing but a movement in the jungle, about 1000 yards from us. We could trace the line of the creatures' march by the sort of ripple they raised in their advance between two waves, as it were, of this sea of grasses taller than themselves, and by the winding track formed by the fall of the thick underwood as they broke it down. We hastened round on foot to cut them off at the bend of the semi-circle, but it was only for the pleasure of seeing them. With our glasses we managed to distinguish three huge greyish forms standing out on the ridge of the opposite hill. At their head marched the male, his high horn

stuck at the end of his nose, then the female; the young one, already as large as a buffalo, trotted along the path opened out by his huge parents. They had hardly disappeared when our beaters jumped down from their perches, radiant with delight at their deliverance from the holy horror inspired in them by the *rhinoceros*, as Ak-Hem calls him.

It is noon now, no breath of air stirring; we are literally scorched by the torrid sun, and shelter ourselves under a flowering tulip-tree to wait for our men to collect together again. The rhinoceroses had evidently crossed to the extreme right of the defile; our plan was to surround them before they could escape, and drive them back to their starting point; and we did our best to encourage our acolytes and to induce them to hold their tongues this time, and to go forward instead of running away.

"Look out, there's a tiger!" suddenly exclaimed M. Bache, who was some 200 yards from us. In the jungle, beyond the range of our guns, there was a stealthy movement as if a gale, blowing on one point only, were bending the blades of grass, but we could not see the beast.

This time we distributed our stations with forethought. The Duc d'Alençon, M. Bache, and M. Philippeau remained under a large tamarind tree, at the bottom of the ravine, in a glade near the brook. The Duc de Penthièvre and I climbed a conical rock covered with brushwood, from which we commanded the only other opening by which our huge game could pass. Not daring to enter the densest of the thickets, but yet

somehow opening for themselves a path, the beaters spread themselves out in parties, doing their best to make themselves formidable by beating cymbals and tom-toms. They advance towards us in this way for about two hours.

I confess that I am not perfectly aware of what was going on all this time. The sun poured down so fiercely its almost deadly rays; thirst, hunger, fatigue, and the excitement of danger had so exhausted me, that, reckless of serpents or scorpions, I had involuntarily lain down upon the rock, streaming with perspiration, exhausted and almost unconscious. Suddenly an Indian, who had come up to me unobserved, shook me violently. Six successive shots woke me completely, and what did I see? The female rhinoceros, followed by her young one, had skirted the stream and halted in a glade 150 yards from the tamarind tree. Have our three friends' balls hit her or not? that is the question; but the creature, holding high her great deformed head, starts again at a quick trot without showing the smallest sign of being hurt. I shall long retain the recollection of this greyish coloured monster crushing with her broad chest every obstacle that came in her way, and following her road disdainfully, not flying, or taking any heed even of the balls fired after her by men. The Duc de Penthièvre has rejoined me, and we are 600 yards from the creature. She must almost necessarily pass along the hill below us, and we are far enough in advance to be able to post ourselves on her probable path to await her.

It is a moment of intense excitement, in which we hasten at full speed down the approach cut through the jungle; if the rhinoceros continues her advance, she must cross it at right angles in less than ten minutes. Purple with the heat which is enough to kill a man, and so streaming that our high india-rubber boots are half filled with water, we are in ecstasies at the idea of meeting the enemy face to face, and firing a ball into her ear (the only way to kill it if one has only leaden bullets). We hastened at racing pace down our road, keeping twenty paces from one another, when the Indians perched on the inaccessible summit of the conical rock, and not daring to come down to us, recalled us by shrill cries as the monster approached the rock. I thought I must have fallen dead under this sky, as I breathlessly climbed the burning peak. Misfortune the second! The shouts attracted the brute towards the men, too quickly for us to get within range, and diverted her from the road where we had been so well placed, and keeping such eager watch. What a shot it might have been, and what havoc the ball would have made, if we had met so near! But it was fated that these natives should be as mischievous as they were indispensable.

The total absence of refreshments made us cry out terribly for food. The cocoa-nuts had been gathered by the natives a fortnight before, and the milk from one nut left hanging on a tree was eagerly drunk in evenly divided mouthfuls. And meanwhile the Regent's bearers, strayed Heaven only knows where, are

lounging in some shady place with the claret and seltzer water!

Our third attempt was the best, notwithstanding the men's fatigue, who would have been put to the blush by our zeal if the colour of their skin had allowed of it. They attacked the thickets more vigorously, only some half-dozen giving way, and, thanks to renewed shouts, the rhinoceros appears again 400 yards to my left. I hastened towards her, thrusting back with my hands the jungle which held me captive as if in a net, and prevented my seeing four paces before me. At last I reached the roots of a large tree; I clung to it, raising myself two or three feet above the ground, and from thence could look just along the top of the grass which filled the little hollow below me.

The brute must pass in front of me. She is 300 paces off, then 200; if she would only come near enough for my ball to take effect! It is exciting, I confess, for I have but one armed Indian with me. I am determined to hold my ground, and when we have fired our four shots, we shall be reduced to a revolver. I hear the noise of the shrubs breaking beneath her; her back hardly rises above the grass; she has arrived at the nearest point to me, some ninety yards off. I would not cock my rifle beforehand, that I might be more master of myself and better able to choose a favourable moment. Taking aim at her great head, I fired my first ball with perfect coolness; but I will not answer for my second, or for my native's two. By raising myself on the gnarled roots, I could see Mrs.

Rhinoceros—wounded, possibly—but certainly irritated into fury at the sound of my weapon, turn herself three times round looking for her enemy. In thus circling, as fate would have it, she came much nearer to me several times, and two shots from my revolver (the only weapon still left me) made my friends believe that I was in at the death, holding the brute at bay. But, alas! the rhinoceros, evidently wounded—in her feelings, seeks me furiously to right and left without finding me, gets excited, sets off at a gallop—and is probably galloping still!

As in Europe a play generally ends with a wedding, a hunt in a distant country generally ends, at least in travellers' tales, in the slaughter of numbers of tigers, rhinoceroses, and crocodiles. You must forgive me if I simply tell you how twelve rifle balls and two shots from a revolver did not bring down one of the finest of the monsters of the jungle. Besides the merit of truth to which I give the highest place in this journal, I shall for once at least have avoided the common-place. Let her go, then, my beautiful rhinoceros! I may consider myself fortunate to have seen it, outside the Zoological Gardens, in its savage state, in the wildest spot imaginable. I have experienced the delightful excitement of this fascinating and dangerous sport.

It is five years, we are told, since a rhinoceros has been killed in Java. The last that fell was lain in wait for by a native; hidden in a willow tree in the midst of a stagnant pool, he loaded his blunderbuss

with seven "pills"; and when the brute came down to drink three paces from him, slowly swallowing immense gulps with wide open mouth, he pulled the trigger and lodged his chaplet of balls in the drinker's head. Some days later numerous flights of eagles and vultures announced by soaring over a particular spot that death had ensued (and with pretty good reason) six miles off.

One ought to come here with four-inch-bore guns and steel bullets or shells. But no, better still, when the rhinoceros, with uplifted horn, enters the thickets to play the agreeable to his fair one who awaits him there, would be to scatter some dozen of Orsini bombs along his probable path, and these bombs might cease, then, to be such hateful things!

The sun was almost set when we reached the nearest village in the valley. Exhausted with heat, hunger, and thirst, we emptied all the little dishes of rice and curry possessed by the Indian chief in his bamboo hut; we eat all his bananas and his shaddocks. The Regent's carriage took us back to Bandong, and the marble hall used as a bath by the dancing girls was thrown open to us; to plunge our exhausted limbs into the clear cool water was like the enjoyment of an earthly paradise.

Before sleeping, I wished to write down for you all my hunting adventures in their first freshness. But this is not so easy as you might suppose in the midst of the Asiatic splendour in which we live at the Regent's. My thirty Malay attendants brought me with much

pomp a glass filled with thick cocoa-nut oil, and adorned with a small unsteady cotton wick. All the mosquitoes who are not employed in devouring me come to burn themselves at my sacred lamp, and form a moving buzzing cloud round it, before they fall dying into the ink or on the paper.

23rd November.—The Regent is coming to-day to hunt and fish with us. His bodyguard attend him, in white skirts and red vests. One carries a gilt umbrella a yard and a half in diameter, another the betel-nut paste which his sovereign is perpetually chewing, this one his tobacco, that one the lighted sandal-wood match. His favourite dwarf, eight-and-twenty years old, and the size of a child of six, carries only his own grotesque little hump, and follows in the train, smiling sarcastically. We crossed a river in a ferryboat made of bamboos, and found twenty white ponies, superbly caparisoned, awaiting us. They were held by grooms dressed in scarlet, who, holding on to the reins, which they would not allow us to manage, make us gallop along in the shade of the most beautiful and luxuriant trees.

The Regent has prepared quite a fête for us. We are on the shores of Lake Dji-Tjiambé, shut in by the picturesque mountains of Mi-Malinji. A strange looking flotilla is moored to the banks, brilliant with clumps of red and yellow rhododendrons, and pink and pale blue azaleas. First comes the floating kiosk for the music; three pirogues, joined together at a distance

of about two yards from one another, carry an erection of bamboos and green branches, palms and banana leaves, under whose shade are installed the musicians of the *gammelang*. Bells tinkle, cymbals clash, and by the aid of the graceful paddles the floating kiosk advances to the front. Once set going on one tune like a musical box, there is no reason why this orchestra should ever change or stop. We take our places in a similar bower of verdure converted into a floating island, and sail gently in the wake of our melodious pilot; the distance which separates us adds to the dreamy soothing effect of the sounds. A tent has been raised in the centre of our triad of pirogues; perfumes are burning there, and the breeze carries across us clouds of balmy vapour, while the dwarf pours us out delicious coffee and tea.

A dozen pirogues follow us. These are nothing but hollowed trunks of trees, rowed in zigzag fashion by a little black boy of nine years' old.

It is a charmingly novel sight, this flotilla, with all the brilliant colours and languishing sounds of the Oriental world, gliding over a lake where the only rocks are the rosy islands of the flowering lotus.

We caught sight of some flocks of blue and white cranes in the little creeks at a distance. This was a signal to the Duc de Penthievre and me, an opportunity of taking some slight revenge for yesterday's fruitless chase. You know me well enough to understand that I had no difficulty in tearing myself away, and ensconced in a small boat, I made for a shady

creek where I hoped to find some wild animals, and to arrive amongst the water-lilies before the sounds of our orchestra could reach there. The man who paddles me sends us skimming across the water, while I lie flat down in the skiff, which is so fragile that the slightest movement threatens to upset it. We get such way on us that, without movement or sound, we glide at last into the middle of a flock of water-fowl. I begin well: two shots, three birds fall. Oh, disenchantment! they are three tame ducks, three pets of his Highness the Regent! He was good enough to laugh, which permitted us to follow his example, and that most heartily for the rest of the day. After this musical shooting party (which is very sultan-like, but very far from being good sport), we took part in a still more Oriental pastime—that of fishing in a preserve. For the last three days the whole population on the shores of the lake has been employed in weaving a palisade of bamboos, something like the trellis-work which borders our railroads. This slender barrier is thrown like a seine into the lake, and then under our eyes rolled round like a ring; the circle narrows more and more, and some fifty natives in the same clothing as the fish they seek, paddle about in this enclosure with the water up to their necks, and fill the neighbouring boats with their innumerable small prey. The Regent amuses himself with watching this, then gives a sign, and with the music preceding us, we land on the further shore of the *Dji Tjiambé*. There under a graceful kiosk a splendid breakfast awaited us; magnificent silk hangings shut

off the end of this open-air saloon. The Regent got very lively, laughing perpetually, as is the way of Asiatics. Between the cups of coffee, positive nectar, which he enjoyed with the most indescribable rollings of his eyes, he called out every moment: "Encour! encour!" And "encour" in modern Javanese means wine, the only trace of the French dominion still left in Java, and a tolerably characteristic memorial of our officials, who called "encore" so often to the cup-bearers that the word still survives.

But all things have an end, even a Belshazzar's feast, enlivened with cayenne pepper, and his Highness the Regent, rising from table and walking almost straight, requested our leave to return direct to his palace, where important state affairs required his presence; but hardly had we set foot on our splendid vessel than we saw the attendants of the seraglio draw the great curtains which hid one of the panels of the room. The Prince with his diamond belt entered the inner compartment of the verandah, where a vision of female graces appeared to us for a moment and then vanished. He had sent on beforehand and hidden here half of his harem! You may suppose that we did not miss the opportunity of indulging in fits of laughter.

One is astonished to find so much done and so many things seen before two o'clock in the afternoon, forgetting always that in these latitudes the day begins at four in the morning. But soon one thought only fills our minds—a desire for shade and coolness. We found

a charming combination of the two in the gorge of Ti-Ka-Poundoung.

We reached it after riding through twisted paths. Imagine a kind of well dug in the virgin forest—an oval cavern about a hundred feet deep, where the rays of the sun never penetrate, and where we feel ourselves far from the world, in the very heart of nature. From the overhanging rocks which frame it hangs an immense curtain of creeping plants interlaced together, the undulations of their dark green foliage resembling the waves of the sea. By what winding ways and abrupt descents we reached the bottom of this abyss, I really cannot tell. Leaning against one side, we admired the cascade formed by a torrent rushing through a gaping hole pierced above the thicket facing us. It falls at our very feet into the dark cavity of the rock, which is supposed to be two hundred feet deep. Since the snows of the Tasmanian valleys, whither the Southern Ocean brought the frosts of the South Pole, we had not felt such an icy atmosphere; while in the eddying spray, which rose above cavern and forest, the solar ray was divided, and seemed to form an airy column of seven brilliant colours. We in these gloomy depths are sprinkled with a cold shower of bubbles thrown off from the waterfall and breaking over us. After six weeks of incessant heat under a tropical sun, a refreshing shiver gives us the most exquisite delight. There are some wild deep-hidden spots, whose severe silence and grandeur appeal directly to the soul; this place has awakened a keener sensibility, and it would appear to

me still more beautiful, more ideal, and full of delight, if I had not attempted to describe it, and risked the loss, by the unveiling, of the supernatural beauties of nature, and the life of the inanimate world. But I was carried away by the charm of the spot: forgive me!

CHAPTER XVII.

VOLCANOES AND SWAMPS.

Ascent of Tankoubanprahou — Hedges of flower of sulphur and fiery caverns — Storm — The sacred wood of Wa-Wou — Men, women, and children in the water — Fever — A Javanese wedding — The Chinese element — The Resident's umbrella.

24th November, 1866.—The Regent's ponies and buffaloes between them take us to the village of Lemback, and we spend three hours in passing through a perfect garden of quinine, coffee, cinnamon, cloves, tea, and vanilla. At the second stage in the approach to the mountain we were received by one of the sons of Raden-Adiepatie-Wiranatta-Kousouma, a nice boy of about sixteen, who is already a "vedana" (chief of a district) and possessor of forty horses, a hundred and fifty attendants, and a harem. He brings to our aid his mountain cavalry, with neighing prancing horses. The scarlet and yellow umbrella-hats of the grooms and outrunners here attain their largest dimension; our attendants resemble Spartans advancing to the attack entirely covered by their immense shields; should the sun kill one of them, we may carry him home, stretched on his hat, according to the old saying of the country of Leonidas, "*Aut in scuto, aut cum scuto.*" For two hours our caravan penetrates deeper into the virgin

forest, by the winding difficult path which leads to the volcano; often we were obliged to alight and scale on foot the clay or rock steps forming a natural ladder, which our animals climbed with the agility of goats. As for the view, it was a continuation of the fairyland which Java has appeared to us ever since we landed—a fairyland whose splendour seems monotonous when described, but which to our eyes always presents some novelty, some new grandeur. Wooded precipices, steep ravines, thickets of pink, red, and yellow mint, and rhododendron, tunnels a mile long under tree ferns thirty or forty feet high—all framed, as it were, in a cornucopia of innumerable many-coloured creepers, which twine round the gigantic trees, pressing them so closely as to seem to desire to choke them.

But by degrees a smell of sulphur begins to spread round us. The foliage of the trees, just now of so vivid a colour, begins to pale; vegetation dies away; the bare trunks remain; but not a leaf, not a bird, not a serpent! At last we reached the crest of the mountain, 5600 feet above the level of the sea. From a projecting point we got a view of the interior of the volcano; it was most strange and striking.

It is an immense double crater, two craters, in fact, opening side by side; one is about 800 yards in diameter, and 600 deep; the other, evidently the more recent, is somewhat less broad and long; the sides are formed of cinders. At the bottom we can see the bubbling steaming waters of a lake on whose banks great mounds of sulphur are burning, from which

heavy clouds of smoke rise straight to the summit of the ridge, where they are caught and carried off by the wind. Eyes, head, and throat are affected by the smell of the sulphurous acid, but we were determined to get down to the lake at the bottom of the abyss, where our glasses showed us a thousand curious sights. Our descent was very much like sliding down a "montagne russe." Our own weight carried us on, our feet becoming useless. The half-warm ashes, which served as a cushion, gave way under us, but luckily we struck against no stones. On the shores of the lake, forming a flat terrace between the water and the side walls of this gigantic funnel, a number of spectral trees stand. Their dead trunks, one mass of mould, are not burned, but literally boiled. The moment we touched them, they crumbled away under our hands. Thousands of little pebbles stood out like islands in the midst of a sea of broiling sand, each perched on the top of a column of earth often a foot high, but as slender as the pebble to which it serves as pedestal, and which is sometimes only half an inch wide. It is like a forest of little columns. It seems to me that this strange phenomenon must be attributed to the action of the rain which falls very straight on this spot, since at so great a depth the wind has no power over it to turn it to one side. Consequently these stones have evidently protected, during the general subsidence, the mounds of earth immediately below them.

Finally, jumping over the sulphurous streams, we ventured up to the bubbling, fetid waters of the lake

itself. The soles of our boots were already roasted, and it was impossible to touch the ground with one's hand. It is unnecessary to say that our Indians, who were the first to descend, abandoned us halfway down, and were now looking down upon us from thence. Around us, from a thousand points, clouds of vapour and an overpowering smell rose from the ground; we could not see four paces before us. The few silver rupees which I had in my pocket turned to a dull black, like a spoon left standing in an egg, and a beautiful bouquet of pink azaleas, which I had at the bottom of my cartridge box, lost all its brilliant colours in a moment.

We stood before a great fissure of some yards square, from which issued a dull rumbling sound, an infernal din, like the bellows of a huge forge, or an engine getting up its steam. Boiling mud and great yellow bubbles of liquid sulphur were thrown up from it in jerks, accompanied by the moaning of a pestilential wind. One might imagine oneself at the *tetri descensus Averni*. To our right is a gaping orifice, now dried up, from which come only sounds as of convulsive sobs of the imprisoned flames. Round it is a graceful hedge of crystallised flower of sulphur, forming filigree work. When we break it down with our canes, the whole erection crumbles into the open gulf of the crater, and is thrown back into the air violently, flying noisily over our heads in every direction like grape-shot from a cannon. To our left, on the exact spot where five minutes before we were standing, the earth shakes,

cracks, and gives way! A stream of mud is thrown up several feet into the air, and in falling back splashes us frightfully.

Although there has been no eruption since 1840, and these little jets springing up and dying away alternately are only in play, we begin to tell ourselves with some reason "that we are dancing over a volcano," and that it would be wise to consider our curiosity as satisfied, and to return to the upper regions. In fact, we were beginning to be suffocated with the strong smell. Our eyes were streaming, our clothes scorched, and we ourselves were performing a chorus of indescribable sneezes. The rising vapours had hidden from us the light of the sun, so that our astonishment was great, when we left this abominable atmosphere, to find that the sky was black with clouds, and to hear heavy peals of thunder. We were still only halfway up the side, and, by a natural law of acoustics, the vibrating currents of air (and what vibrations these are in the tropics!) entering our funnel resounded on all sides with the most frightful din; the crater where we were formed merely the bell of the trumpet, of which the flourish was performed by the violent claps of thunder!

We, who just now were streaming with heat, and half stifled by the boiling lake, are now wet to the skin by a deluge of rain which falls with frightful violence, chilling every limb! Our poor Indians are miserable objects, shivering, and with teeth chattering. We ourselves must bend head and body beneath these frightful detonations, multiplied a hundredfold by the peculiar

shape of the hollow we are in. With great difficulty we clambered up to the outer edge of the crater. The open air, where the sounds were no longer imprisoned, or the atmosphere that of a fiery furnace, seemed almost still to our deafened ears, and deliciously pure to our exhausted lungs. But what a spectacle is presented by the ravages of a storm in this latitude! Two storms have been let loose together over Tankoubanprahou. One is below us, and rolls its heavy black clouds over the plain and the first spurs of the mountain. Seen from above, it is like a gloomy sea with great waves, among which the lightning shines like phosphorescent sparks. At first we could see nothing but the dark curtain of clouds charged with opposing forces of electricity, the centre of the convulsion whence the thunder grew and issued; then the ravages on the plain along its course.

The second storm, taking its course in the regions above us, poured down its icy waters for the first hour as if a river had broken loose upon us. In our miserable linen garments we shook as if with ague, and we hesitated for a long time as to where we could find shelter, caught as we were between the subterranean fire, which by electric influence was more violently agitated beneath our feet at the bottom of the abyss, and the fires of heaven, which fell around us twenty times in a minute in the primeval forest! But this was soon succeeded by a storm without rain, far more terrific. With a fearful crash, the thunderbolt scattered, in the twinkling of an eye, the whole line of forest which,

already half stifled by the sulphur, surrounded within a distance of three miles the rounded summit of Tankoubanprahou with a garland of decayed vegetation. One of these bare trunks, split into fragments, carries with it in its fall all its tottering neighbours. Nothing can be imagined more frightful than these loud and repeated blows carrying death into what was already a cemetery of nature. The meeting of furious contrary gales accomplishes the destruction, and that the faster because there is no green wood around us; nothing bends, but all breaks.

I know not what we have done to deserve that heaven should spare us in this frightful shock of the elements, for every moment we expect to follow the fate of the unhappy trees falling round us. At the end of three hours we were enabled to resume our road to the valley. It was a giddy scramble; our spirits had returned; we had abandoned to its fate our formerly brilliant cavalry escort, and following the road on foot that we might keep ourselves warm, we seemed to be sliding down an immense cake of soap at an angle of forty-five degrees. The blue clay, made slippery by the water, obliged us to take the most wonderful strides, and an occasional fall without the power of stopping oneself for the next twenty yards. When we arrived at the outskirts of the forest, we were horrified at seeing hundreds of trees struck down by lightning, with their bark stripped off, lying on the ground, besides the traces of tigers and serpents imprinted in the mud.

It was a great delight at last to reach one of the

houses belonging to the courteous vedana of Lemback! In a moment we had torn up resolutely the planks from under our feet, and made a huge pile of them, as if for a mid-summer bonfire, in the middle of the verandah. It was soon blazing high, the flames rising nearly to the ceiling. Here, in the same dress as Eve before the fall, we made a ring round the fire with outstretched arms, wringing out and drying our clothes. The natives hastened to offer us fruits, while the vedana appeared delighted. From the rapidity of our actions, in seizing our plunder and forming our bivouac, we might have been taken for Zouaves!

25th November, 1866.—Our French party separates to-day into two divisions. One makes its way to the coast, and from thence goes westward, through India to Europe; the other advances further into the interior to visit the little-known courts of the Sultans of Sourakarta and Djokjokarta, and if it ever reaches Europe, it will be by the East, by Japan, the Pacific Ocean, and California.

The Duc d'Alençon had left Europe before us. He had seen some fighting, had visited Yeddo and Pekin; imperative duties called him home. We, on the contrary, had hardly got through a third of our wanderings, and, trusting to our lucky star, had yet to brave the frosts of Mongolia, after leaving the tropical heats, seeking instruction in the successive views offered to us by the most widely differing countries in the world. After our long dreamed of and well-planned

meeting, at this central point in the far East, this renewed separation from those who for the last ten days had seemed to restore us to home and country, filled us with sorrow. Oh, friends, who are going to meet our dear ones, tell them that our hearts beat still for them and for France, that we are careful of our lives in hopes of returning to them! When? I know not. Within a year, I hope.

We started at dawn, offering our sincere thanks to the courteous Regent, and to M. Philippeau, who had been so cordial and kind to us. Following a road along a cliff overhanging a rocky precipice 300 yards deep, we passed in a few hours from the beautiful hill country into a marshy plain. For the first time since leaving Batavia, we met some travellers; they were two officials of the colonial government, in uniform, no doubt on some tour of inspection. Dark forests of teak, that broad-leaved tree whose wood is so valuable for building purposes, formed the connecting link between the regular coffee plantations which cover the mountain sides, and the fields of sugar cane which stretch over the plain as far as the eye can reach.

As we were crossing one of these great teak forests, we suddenly sprang out of the carriage, at the sight of two great black, long-tailed monkeys, swinging like pendulums from one tree to another. As soon as they caught sight of us, they scattered as rapidly as a flock of pigeons, seeming literally to fly! It was in vain that we rushed through the grass, frightening away the serpents, and trying to penetrate with our eyes

the depths of the great leaves; we could only see, far away on the horizon, some black specks gambolling in the tops of the trees. But we were soon stopped by the consternation our weapons excited in the minds of the natives who were coming and going along the road. Ak-Hem explained to us as best he could that these good people looked upon the murder of a monkey as quite as great a crime as the assassination of one of themselves. We returned our guns to their cases, fully agreeing in the truth of the likeness, of which our guide himself was a striking proof. We are *assured* that not far from here is a sacred wood, inhabited by 500 or 600 monkeys, whom the natives feed with rice and fruits. These monkeys have, it appears, a king who always eats first of everything alone, while his subjects await his permission at a distance. At the sign of command, the famished troop throw themselves upon the meal, and fight over it tooth and nail. I am greatly distressed that we had no time to witness this curious application of the theory of "personal government" otherwise than with the eyes of faith; and mine, when travelling, are unfortunately remarkably short-sighted.

Hundreds of anecdotes are told concerning these "doubles" of the Javanese. The most curious thing certainly is this. If you question a native on the subject, there is not one who will not tell you: "The monkeys are men just like ourselves (they hold firmly to that), but they are much cleverer, and have never chosen to speak, so that they might not be made to

work." Is not this the pendant to Æsop's fable of the horse and the wild boar? It proves, too, how with these people labour is confounded with serfdom, while with us labour is considered as the blessed source of prosperity and wealth, as the means of purifying and ennobling the soul.

Towards the middle of the day, we had already exhausted some three dozen ponies, but we had found as yet nothing to eat. In the barn at Sumadang, dignified with the name of hotel we found a couple of hundred of insects expiring on the table-cloth, a *Revue des Deux Mondes* of 1853, and a rancid sausage evidently of the same date. The landlord was expressing in his native tongue his regrets at having absolutely nothing else, when I heard a cock crow! To assault the poultry-yard, pass sentence of death upon the ancient warrior, and extemporise a spit, with strings turned by hand—all was the work of a second. Besides, the cock was an undoubted sign of the existence of a hen, and the hen must have laid eggs. But the omelette and the roast chicken cost us the modest sum of thirty-two shillings, which proves that travelling in Java is not the way to make one's fortune.

In the evening we arrived at the Tji-Manoek, a broad shallow river, with a populous village on either bank at the point where the road joins it. The chief of the first village, with 400 labourers, followed out of curiosity by the women and children, embarked our carriage upon the boats, and deposited it in the middle of the river, where we were met by the inhabitants of the

opposite village. There was only two feet depth of water over the space of nearly 300 yards which still divided us from the shore. As the boats were of no use, the worthy people, with the water above their knees, harnessed themselves gallantly to an immensely long rope, and towed us like a ship that is going into dock; but our luggage, light as it is, increased the weight of our carriage too much. Soon we stuck in the mud, becoming an island surrounded by water. A violent effort broke the rope, and men, women, and children, who were clinging to it, took a general bath, with the most picturesque effect. They are so good-natured that they luckily laughed at it themselves.

A second edition of yesterday's deluge of rain caught us presently in this marshy plain. We drew the curtains of our carriage, and slumbered patiently. From time to time we moved on a few paces by the light of an immense torch of tarred bamboo thongs, which we had stuck like a May-pole on the top of our vehicle. By the aid of a good many bundles of green wood, and of our brilliant illumination, we reached Cheribon, a little town on the sea-coast, at eleven o'clock in the evening, having travelled ninety-six miles in nineteen hours.

I must confess that my assistance in this morning's raid was purely disinterested. I was forced to leave our booty in the hands of my travelling companions, for either the volcano or the swamp has brought on a violent attack of fever. I would not give credit at first to a horrid warning shiver, but the poisonous miasmas

have so thoroughly got hold of me that my nails have turned perfectly black all over. My only meal, therefore, was a dose of forty grains of quinine; but my real remedy will be the air of the mountains, whither we wend our way presently, at five o'clock in the morning, but which will take us three days to reach.

The little hotel at Cheribon appears to be full of people. A wretched Malay servant, the only person awake when we arrived, led me to my room—a little hut at the end of the garden, some five yards from the sea. There, harassed by thousands of mosquitoes, and shivering with fever, I listen to the faint monotonous sounds of the calm sea, whose tiny waves are thrown upon the sand close by me. Ah! what thousands of miles of ocean separate me from my friends; and how much more I feel the distance, ill and wretched, in the silence of this miserable sight! I knew that in distant countries I must expect accidents and illness; but the more the fever gains upon me, imitating the restless sea which is rising, rising still, as if to stifle me, the more I cling to this letter, which at least will surely reach you, and which is the one material link which still unites us across the ocean!

27th November, 1866, Pékalongan.—For the first time since leaving London, I was unable yesterday to write down my daily memorandum. We started from Cheribon under difficulties; our living dictionary, the faithful Ak-Hem, had disappeared! We discovered then, for the first time, the splendid effect that our

government firman could produce. As soon as we showed it, the local policemen, armed with iron-wood staffs, started in search, as if moved by an order from on high, and in two hours brought back the poor wretch more dead than alive. We made as slight use as we could of our prestige as white men, thinking a good lecture quite sufficient, an act of clemency unheard of in these latitudes, where it is the correct thing to show one's superiority by treating the poor devils like dogs. These Javanese janissaries made a great display of zeal, offering with the most amiable smile to put the poor wretch in prison, his only crime being that he had over-stayed his time some two hours at a wedding; but the pleasure of forgiving, unknown here, was increased for us by the preservation of our factotum. The latter mounted, therefore, to his seat, where, notwithstanding the tropical heat, he prided himself on displaying before the eyes of his half-nude countrymen a thick mohair cloak which he had brought from Sydney. An Indian cares little for suffocation if only he can disguise himself as a European.

Our road was flat, following the seashore in a straight line, where, here and there, behind the clumps of palm trees, appeared the rounded sterns of some old Dutch galleons, sleeping on their anchors. Beneath the burning sun, the great swamps around us exhaled the most disgusting and poisonous smells; in the morning particularly, when the chilled vapours hang heavily within a few yards of the miry ground, one feels one's life attacked in its most sensitive organs, which

these miasmas affect as the sulphurous vapours discolour the most brilliant azaleas. On the other hand, this seems the promised land of argils, pelicans, cranes, and snipes; their number is fabulous. I had no strength to hold my gun, but the prince bagged in a few minutes such a quantity of this various game that he came back quite disgusted, declaring that it was not sport, but butchery. On one bank alone, we saw a perfect army. Some 300 birds were perched there on 300 legs (the other 300 were all resting under the wings), exactly as they are represented in the most eccentric of Chinese screens. A hundred canals cross one another at right angles, seemingly full of fish leaping up; at any rate fisherman swarm here, in villages entirely built upon piles. How any one can live in this atmosphere, is to me a problem! At times we passed through such swarms of mosquitoes that they threw a thin shadow on the ground; if we clapped our hands together, we crushed a whole sticky mass. They bury themselves by troops in mouth and eyes as soon as one opens them, and consider one's nose as a charming hiding-place.

At Tagal, the Resident, M. Jellinghans, a most agreeable and well-informed man, who spoke French wonderfully well, had prepared a sumptuous "tiffin" for us, as the English luncheon is called in the Indies. The cloth was laid before us, but within five minutes it was black with these abominable buzzing creatures, who remind one of the third plague in Egypt.

At last towards sunset we got out of this birthplace

of all the diptera, aphaniptera, and hymenoptera in creation, which would have charmed a naturalist, but which only exasperated me. If only this teasing, stinging, venomous race had found no place in Noah's ark, how happy mortals might be here! As soon as the living cloud had disappeared, and we could open our eyes, the setting sun gave marvellous effect to the beautiful form of the Slammat, a volcano rising 10,500 feet above us. The outline is marked in purple, with shadows of the softest blue touching the buttresses of the mountain. A rocky peak of the most curious shape sends back, as if from an immense reflector, the last rosy hues of the sun over the pale rice plantations, and the sparkling tulip trees. As we leave the swamps, we return to a beautiful country. The long avenues of Pékalongan (a city containing 50,000 inhabitants) shelter us in their bowers of tamarind trees. From the Chinese "campong" and the Malay suburbs, crowds of people swarm to meet us, thirty or forty people coming out of each hut, while at the doors stand groups of perfectly naked children singing and shrieking at the pitch of their lungs. We crossed at last the splendid threshold of the residence where M. Boutmy extends to us a regal hospitality.

Our party was so completely prostrate to-day, one from ophthalmia, another from sunstroke, the third from fever, that we were obliged to give up a stag hunt for which the Resident had made magnificent preparations in our honour. The deer had been meant to fall before us like rabbits, but our first consideration being to bring

back our own skins to Europe even rather than theirs, we prefer to take care of ourselves.

Whilst I write, a most infernal music tears me away from my inkstand. A wedding is passing across the great square. Two huge puppets, evidently intended to represent a man and a woman, head the procession. Then follow the musicians thundering on some sixty tom-toms; then, mounted on gaily harnessed ponies, a hundred young men in pink or blue silk "sarongs" (petticoats), and adorned with necklaces, brilliant scarfs passed across one shoulder over their naked bodies, and gold-handled krisses passed through their sashes. The bridegroom was modestly ensconced in a palanquin carried by four men. He wears a silver belt, and his face is covered with a thick layer of bright yellow paint made with saffron. His hands, the calves of his legs; and his feet are daubed in the same way. He is followed by a long procession of his whole family. The happy bride is kept at a respectful distance, but appears, notwithstanding her splendid attire, to have been dipped in the same pail with her bridegroom. You can conceive nothing more absurdly comic. Evidently these are the favourite bridal colours of the Javanese. We asked the age of the principal performers in the entertainment. *She* is eleven years old, and *he* fourteen. The young couple can only make up twenty-five years between them! But, as the men here wear exactly the same dress as the women, and have no beards, we had fairly confounded the bride with the bridegroom, and only discovered this "mis-

taken identity" on Ak-Hem repeating his explanation a third time. I must retract, therefore; it was the lady who was in the palanquin, and her husband who kept at a respectful distance. He was seated in a bamboo carriage; his coachman in full Javanese dress, and a black hat with an English cockade. Two grooms, eight years of age, without tunics or top boots, stood by him as stiffly as if they had been stuffed. Behind him walked his father, his mother bathed in tears, and his father's other wives, for whom the poverty of our language has not yet found any proper term of relationship. They are almost stepmothers, but there is a want in the dictionary of any word to express the legalised superabundance of relations which constitutes polygamy.

The tears of the parents, the long wreaths of orange blossoms, and the foolish and embarrassed air of the principal actors in the ceremony, were the only things to remind me of Europe in this strange procession of nearly 10,000 people, a motley, brilliant, supremely grotesque crowd.

I followed idly after the procession, exactly as the little street boys in Paris follow the drums and fifes, and for more than an hour I amused myself with staring at this extraordinary assembly, and at a ceremony which would require a volume to describe—and even then a good many things would remain beyond one's comprehension; but by degrees I saw that my perseverance was exciting public curiosity, that I was myself taking the part of drums and fifes to all these Javanese, who

standing one on top of another could hardly reach to the top of a European's head. I have learnt since that no white man here would so lower himself as to mix thus in a crowd. It is bad taste to go on foot. Without an umbrella-bearer, it is indecorous; without a match-bearer, almost disgraceful; and without a haughty manner, it is the depth of degradation!

Not being yet accustomed to the part of satraps, the Prince and I went without any fuss to visit the Chinese campong. In all the towns the Celestials form a little colony, which the government indeed takes care to keep as small as possible. These people, essentially intelligent and keen-sighted, who can live upon nothing, can bend to all circumstances, and are marvellously gifted in everything that relates to commerce, are as greedy of gain as they are of work. The most difficult trades cannot disgust them; they understand cleverly how to create needs which they only are in a position to satisfy. Thus, some hundred emigrants from the Celestial Empire, who no doubt left their native land in poverty, become the principal purveyors of provisions in a province containing a million Javanese. They are necessary to the circulation of the wealth of the country, which they certainly understand how to suck up wonderfully; they lay by in store for times of famine—perhaps somewhat forestalling; they unite fraternally in buying wholesale, vying with one another in fraudulent gains on retail sales; they stimulate financial enterprises which would fail without their aid, but like, perhaps a little too well, short loans

at exorbitant interest, and take delight in their particular triumph of usury; in short, they seem to me to be the Jews of the Dutch Indies.

In the straight but stinking streets of the campong we saw a violent quarrel take place. A crowd collected, and the most excited of the Chinamen took up a cock and cut its throat. It was explained to me that without this ceremony a Chinese oath has no force.

When we went out at night with the Resident, I was much surprised to see him preceded at such an hour by his gilt umbrella-bearer. "But," said he, "these are our epaulettes; you must have noticed them with any of my colleagues whom you have seen." Borrowed from the necessities of a tropical climate, the umbrella (*payong*), a vulgar instrument in other quarters of the world, becomes here the symbol of command. If our friend, the magistrate emperor, is about to promulgate some edict, by virtue of his right to imprison 2000 Javanese, Sundanese, or Chinese in five minutes, it is escorted by his umbrella as by the great seal, that he goes to administer justice. If he is going to review the cavalry and infantry regiments under his command, the umbrella again, unmilitary as it appears, is equivalent to the general's gorget and stars. If he has to subdue a revolt or to pardon criminals, the umbrella becomes the sacred staff in his paternal hand.

The larger this badge is made the higher is the rank which it implies. This one is a yard and three-

quarters in diameter, and the handle two yards long. It is a family or carriage umbrella, and corresponds to the highest rank. The Assistant-Resident's umbrella has less gold, and gives less shade; the controller has no gold, and can only just screen himself; as to the vedana, I should not be surprised to see that he had got nothing but the handle. In short, with all his embroidered uniforms, his sword and plumed hat, the Resident is but a man in the eyes of the Javanese. With his umbrella, he is a satrap and a demi-god. But, happily for all, he has what neither satraps nor demi-gods possess—a thorough knowledge of jurisprudence, consummate administrative talent, and a frank straightforward exercise of authority.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A SULTAN.

Evolutions of Javanese dragoons — Rejoicings at the birth of the Sultan's thirty-third son — Prince Mangkou-Negoro — Reception at the palace — Prostration of four thousand people — The harem — The Dutch fort — Gala scenes.

28th November, 1866, *Samarang*.—If we were on our way to marry the heiress to the throne of Sourakarta, we could not present a more perfect picture of Oriental magnificence. We left Pékalongan at six in the morning, and arrived here at four in the afternoon, having galloped all the way, accompanied the whole time by an advance guard, and an escort of twenty Javanese "dragoons." Mounted on nice little ponies, and dressed in green and red, with great helmets made of pasteboard with a flaming feather at the top, our dragoons careered around us in wonderful confusion. Occasionally a helmet was upset, the skirts flew up in the air, and the arms worked like the sails of a wind-mill; altogether, it had very much the effect of a troop of monkeys tumbling about on dogs. But, for all that, it was not the less pleasant. At each stage we had a fresh escort, ready to kill their horses in our honour.

You need not fear that we are running the least danger in this beautiful island of Java, amongst a

people who are so kind and courteous to the white men. An ordinary cane would be a sufficient weapon to disperse all the criminals on these shores. The escort is only a graceful attention on the part of M. Boutmy, who thus protects us from under the shadow of his official umbrella, and honours us in this way whenever we gallop over the fertile country which abounds under his government. We are in the midst of Asiatic magnificence, delighted, enchanted, but above all, grateful.

At the first stage, a table was ready prepared for us with hot tea, and quantities of delicious fruits, beneath the shade of high banana trees; the native chief served us himself, dressed in his best. We were overwhelmed at finding precisely the same thing at each stage. Our journey turned into a state progress; the roads were swept, the population in holiday attire; we were obliged to taste everything to please them; and if one may judge by the complimentary remarks of these picturesque-looking chiefs—whom we raised up as they attempted to kneel before us, and overpowered with delight by shaking them by the hand—we must be very popular, at very little cost, in this kingdom in which we have reigned for one day.

When I saw all this splendour and these scenes of a past age, I was so determined that I would not show the astonished population a wretched-looking European that the fever left me, and I became quite well. But the sights I saw will, no doubt, seem to you more like the hazy dreams of delirium.

Tobacco plantations abound in the plain which we crossed ; enormous sheds are arranged at regular intervals of about a mile, in which to dry the plants. Then come fields of sugar cane, five or six miles long, where troops of coolies are at work, and the chimneys of the refineries emit their black smoke against the sky. Finally, long avenues of mimosas conduct us to Samarang, a town containing sixty thousand souls, and rivalling Batavia in the splendour of its streets and houses. Having to start before sunrise, we discreetly refused a cordial invitation to lodge at the palace. All the authorities came to visit the Prince in full dress, notwithstanding torrents of rain, and the most interesting conversation occupied us throughout the evening.

November 30, 1866.—Here we are at the entrance of an entirely new region. There are two large provinces in Java called “the Imperial Territory,” where two sultans reign. They have never been made subject to Holland, the latter being content to keep a diplomatic agent there, under the name of resident, and to exercise a protectorate, whose limits I am very curious to discover. From what I am told, the relations between these neighbours, whose power is so unequal, is perfectly friendly, and various postal, commercial, and travelling arrangements combine for the prosperity of the two countries.

We have only stopped once since Samarang, at the pretty little village of Salatiga, where we were lodged at the Residence, and entertained by the officers of the

garrison, who speak French as well as we do. We followed the post-road, which acts as a kind of outlet to the network of roads in the interior, and on which there is a great deal of traffic; on either sides is a path, one reserved for carts, the other for beasts of burden. These carts, of antediluvian shape, have wheels made of the section of a trunk of the teak tree, and are covered with a bamboo roof, to protect the wares they carry. They are drawn by yokes of pink oxen, and go one behind another in troops of fifty or sixty; while to our left are caravans of at least five hundred pack horses. The activity and commercial movement are as great as the modes of transport are primitive.

Leaving on our right the broken outlines of two fine volcanoes, the Merbabou (10,000 feet), and the Merapi (9000 feet), we reached a high plateau, by roads bordered with yellow-blossomed tulip trees, dragon trees, with their curious branches, tender sensitive plants, and bread trees. On the way we passed the luxurious carriage of a Javanese princess, surrounded with some dozen attendants, and a messenger brought us a letter of invitation from the Resident, announcing that his majesty gave us leave to enter the capital—for we were in the Emperor's territory.

The public square of Sourakarta presents a very strange appearance. Mandarins and great people walk amongst the crowd, followed by an attendant carrying a green or yellow umbrella to shade them; groups of soldiers, armed with pikes, and gold-handled krisses, with sugar-loaf hats and red skirts, parade the streets.

Piles of curious-looking halberds are arranged at regular intervals; and thousands of women move in procession towards the minarets of the palace, which can be seen in the distance beyond the tufts of palm trees. The Residence itself is almost empty. What can have happened? Ah! This morning the Sultan became the happy father of his three-and-thirtieth child, and great and small troop in joyful crowds to offer him their respectful congratulations.

Presently the Resident returned to us, covered with gold, and accompanied by the colonel of the imperial guard, a handsome half-caste, in full dress. We expressed a great wish to pay our respects to the Emperor, but the Resident is the only European he had ever seen; his palace has always been a tabernacle closed to the Gentiles. But by talking very loudly of the Prince's descent from Henry IV., M. Lammers van Foovenburg hopes to obtain this signal exception in his favour. He gave a diplomatic despatch to the handsome half-caste, and we awaited with anxiety his Javanese majesty's reply.

We inhaled the exquisite freshness of the air beneath the marble columns of the Residence. At the top of a magnificent flight of steps, leading to the verandah, we saw two beautiful objects, which are witnesses to the time when the Dutch profited by their time-honoured habit of slipping into countries which seemed closed to other people, and acquired for themselves alone the wonders of Japan. They were two candelabra, twice the height of a man, in bronze, inlaid with gold and

silver, and representing warriors holding gigantic torches. The minuteness of the chasing, the perfection of the casting, the beauty of the inlaying, overwhelmed me with admiration.¹

During a pleasant dinner we were warned of the thousand and one extraordinary rules of etiquette which we must observe if we were admitted into the palace. The Resident was then obliged to leave us, called away by various duties. This morning he was an ambassador, at noon he turns into a magistrate, and this evening he will be a general. He walked slowly towards the magisterial "pendoppo," a sort of marble bench, measuring fifty yards each way, and raised above the ground by steps. High columns of teak wood support a roof like a Chinese pagoda which shades him, and by day forms a great kiosk. There he holds his court of "ka-adillan," in the presence of some hundred chiefs, who come from their various districts in brilliant dresses, and, after fifteen consecutive bows, present their reports.

In front of the steps was a detachment of native policemen, barefooted, in charge of some three or four hundred handcuffed prisoners. Our host seated himself in his character of magistrate, beneath the dais, where two native lawyers, squatting down before him, read the accusations in a nasal and monotonous voice; the Mahomedan priest, cowering against a column, comes forward at each new appeal, and humbly gives

¹ I have gone through China and Japan since, seeing the most beautiful works of ancient art, and I have never found any bronze whose beauty was not far inferior to these wonderful statues.

his opinion. Keeping strictly to the native code, and questioning, by sign, a counsel of venerable marabouts, who sit on their heels at the end of the tribunal, the magistrate condemns and acquits, on his own authority, and in the name of the Koran. In a couple of hours judgment is passed on all, and two streams leave by the great door, one laughing and cheerful, the other weeping, on their way to the nearest prison. The commencement of this alliance has a very careful and paternal appearance. I think the Emperor of Solo (Solo, Sourakarta, or Souerakarta, as you please) ought to feel highly flattered that the ambassador of his noble and powerful neighbour, the King of Holland, chooses to undertake the settling of the crimes and misdemeanours of his people.

As soon as the sun became less scorching, we paraded about in carriages drawn by six horses. In the centre of the town is a smaller and fortified town, called the "Kraton," which is the Emperor's palace. It is surrounded by high walls, flanked with white minarets, and only four gates open into it; they are carved in open work, and very ancient. The object of our drive was a visit to Prince Mangkou-Negoro.

He is an independent prince, with the title of "Pangheran-Adiepatie and Ario," which expresses his very aristocratic origin. He possesses considerable property enclosed in the empire, and a private army, composed of Javanese, trained in the European manner. There is great rivalry between him and the Emperor, both in political influence and material force; each one

in turn fears to be supplanted by the other in his system of proud independence. The weakest calls in the influence of the Dutch to his assistance, who, by way of setting them straight, cuts up their possessions, and crushes them more and more. But this Mangkou-Negoro deserves some respect; he is the most distinguished man amongst the natives of Java. By dint of studying European sciences, he has made great progress in cultivation, has built sugar refineries, and imported several steam engines. He is the one representative of progress, in the midst of this last stronghold of Malay power, and in the shades of the ancient palaces which shelter the last descendants of barbaric sultans.

We arrived beneath the gateway of the palace; the guard turned out, and the Prince received us in the uniform of a Dutch colonel. It is very odd that this man, who is as jealous as a tiger of his liberty, is still more proud of wearing this uniform, and the orders with which the King of Holland has decorated him. His palace is a sort of pagoda, abounding in scattered ornaments of the most fantastic nature. But, as night came on, all its details were hidden by the mysterious light rising from Etruscan lamps, which emitted but a hazy glimmer, while little scented clouds rose from above the incense-burners. Innumerable servants crouched in the corners. We walked across the white marble floor of the "dalem," a large square room, where all visits of ceremony are received. The Princess entered; she was still young, very pale, with exceedingly soft eyes, a beautiful hand, and teeth blackened

by native sweatmeat.¹ It is a sufficiently characteristic feature in this Prince that, while polygamy is the law of the country, respected and kept by all, he is so much the friend of Europe that, wishing to imitate our customs, he has taken this woman for his only wife.

After having thus acquainted us with what is now a point of honour with him, he bade us be seated, and there we sat like a circle of mandarins, not expecting that a conversation which must be entirely carried on through the medium of an interpreter could be very exciting. But we were soon struck with the knowledge the Prince displayed of European affairs. He touched upon the occupation of Rome, photography, the opera, and the Seven Days' War. He was enthusiastic about military tactics and new weapons. His eyes sparkled when he saw the Legion of Honour, and the Crimean Medal, worn by Fauvel; and he seized the opportunity to ask for details of battles, which were given briefly, but with that charm which is characteristic of the narrator. Then he asked the Duc de Penthièvre about America, and insisted upon all the details of that giant war, in which the Prince took part when only sixteen years of age, in the Federal ranks.

It is curious to see the indistinct ideas which Asiatics have about distant countries. This unexpected conversation, which was deeper and more discursive than I can describe, has left in my mind the recollection of a

¹ This paste, which men and women chew incessantly here, is made of betel-nut, tobacco, and gambier.

thousand questions, some childish in the extreme, some ably reasoned, but reasoned after a logic which is miles removed from ours.

Mangkou-Negoro would not let us go before producing from amongst his archives a real surprise for us, an album containing large lithographic portraits of King Louis-Philippe, and of all his sons, taken at the time when they were fighting beneath an African sun. This touching sign of days gone by went straight to my heart. Then he wanted to take us through his territory into the mountains, and to arrange a hunt for us, or a royal progress, or even, if we liked, a little war. He was very anxious for us to see his troops, whose manœuvres, it seems, are exceptionally good. It was a pity we were obliged to refuse. But if we yielded to every temptation that meets us during our journey over the twenty thousand miles that separate us from you, we should not get back to old Europe before 1880; and, between affection and curiosity, the former will carry the day.

1st December, 1866.—When I awoke this morning, I thought it was pouring with rain; but it was only the flight of thousands of tiny birds, called “paddas” (rice stealers), that I heard. They twisted in incessant circles round the beautiful trees in the garden, making a noise like a waterfall, and the tops of high trees, which were joined together by masses of creepers, were literally covered by them. The song of the birds of the air was succeeded by military music. The native

troops marched three times in front of the Residence, and the curious-looking soldiers, whose portraits I send you, played the "Marseillaise" and "Mère Michel," on their copper instruments, with certain sonorous harmonies calculated to make one's hair stand on end. The contrast was curious between the revolutionary hymn which rouses every thought of liberty, and the humble janissaries of a sultan; between the street song of a Paris gamin and the motley aspect of an Asiatic crowd. Half-naked potentates move about in their palanquins, beneath immense yellow umbrellas, accompanied by an escort of slaves, carrying tobacco, kriss, and betel-nut.

The imperial reply arrived at last; we are to be received with great pomp, at the same time as a deputation from the neighbouring sultan, Hamangkoe-Bouvono-Seriopati-Ingalogo-Ngaodoer-Rachman-Saidin-Panatogomo-Ralifatolah VI., Emperor of Djokjokarta! Preceded by the extraordinary music of the country, we saw a large number of mandarins jogging along under an equally large number of huge umbrellas, which shone in the sun. It was the lord chamberlain, who came in person to announce the important news, accompanied by four hundred regents and princes belonging to the court. They all had the "topji" on, a high cap of white or blue stuff, like a sugar-loaf with the top cut off (what a gardener would call a flower-pot topsy-turvy, and a geometrician a conic frustrum); their upper dresses are of red, green, or blue silk, bordered with precious stones; and the "sarrong," the long shirt

worn by the Chinese, trails on the ground. Having arrived at a gentle trot, the whole party rested for three seconds on their heels, while the chief delivered his message in two words, then the crowd suddenly started off, causing great confusion amongst the payongs (umbrellas), which the startled bearers knocked up against each other and upset.

Then another party of princes arrived with the same paraphernalia; they came this time to fetch a letter of congratulation from Hamangkoe-Bouvono (I have not time now to write his whole name), which, by some curious arrangement, had been left by the deputies in the hands of the Resident. He gave it to the prime minister, who passed it on to the captain of the guard. It was enclosed in a yellow silk bag, which is the royal colour here, and placed on a large golden salver. The captain then solemnly walked down the marble steps, in sight of the crowd crouched upon the ground, and carried it to the carriage which was in waiting. Oh, what a wonderful carriage that was! It looked like a pointed sugar basin painted yellow; it was perched upon sixteen springs, and in front was an erection of iron bars, which formed an elevated seat for the coachman. The whole was drawn by six white ponies, with gay trappings, and escorted by a squadron of barefooted cavalry, equipped with spurs and petticoats.

The officer, after climbing breathlessly up the eight steps to the carriage, seated himself in this erection with a gravity which I envied him, and, with his head up and uncovered, his eyes fixed, and his arms stiffened,

held up the letter on its plate in the air, as if it were the most sacred thing in the world. Amidst a respectful silence the whole population prostrated themselves with their faces to the earth; you could have heard a pin drop. I must confess that I went into suppressed convulsions of laughter till the tears rolled down my cheeks. The procession set off, the harnessed sugar-basin at the head, beneath the shade of an imperial yellow "payong," spread out at the end of a stick four yards long. We followed with all solemnity in the Resident's carriages, and a mile behind us I could still see the waving crowd of princes, viziers, rajahs, and Javanese adipaties. It was a pomp worthy of the Queen of Sheba, when she went to visit King Solomon.

We soon arrived at the walls of the "Kraton." The ancient gates creaked on their hinges, and the inner and sacred city appeared before us. Only imagine, the "Kraton" contains ten thousand people! It is the Versailles of a Malay Louis XIV., a whole town contained in a palace, where he collects his lords, his children, his wives, and his servants. All but the harem ran to receive us, and, arranged in ranks, formed a lane up which we walked, while they bowed their noses to the dust. We alighted on the ground in front of the "two sacred trees," the Warrings, two giants with thousands of offshoots, considered as symbols of high rank. We proceeded solemnly beneath the shade of green umbrellas, carried behind each of us by a rajah with a golden kriss, a gilded helmet, and a scarlet skirt. Forced to walk with dignity amidst this Asiatic

pomp, we crossed in state a series of twelve inner courts, surrounded by beautiful terraces. Each door was kept by a guard of the imperial army, lance in hand, with a skirt tied round the waist, and a black and yellow turban. Native musicians, draped in long red robes, played the noisiest of Oriental music, making great use of bamboo flutes, two yards and a half long. We passed in front of bronze monsters, dating from the very earliest days; cannon served by artillerymen worthy of the year 1346; and cages in which fighting tigers were kept.

The standard, which represents a curious bird embroidered in gold, bent before us at every step; and St. George overpowering the dragon could not have presented a more martial appearance than this chocolate-coloured soldier, with his coloured pasteboard helmet, who struck his lance into the ground before our steps. We were received in the heart of the palace, in an immense court, by the main body of the army, amidst the prostration of another population; and before us, arranged in ranks on the steps of a white marble staircase, were crouched the four hundred princes who had presented so brilliant an appearance so short a time before. Now, out of respect to their master, they were bare to the waist, and their long tails of hair fell down their backs. This was the entrance to the palace of the Sultan's wives. Three thousand Javanese women are in the service of his imperial majesty! The two chief keepers of the harem were on the threshold, and from thence the sight was magnificent. This court

is a square of some four or five hundred yards in depth, and surrounded by a colonnade. It was filled with many hundred rajahs, crouched down in circles according to their rank, with their silvered sugar loaf hats, bare chests, and sparkling weapons exposed to the sun.

In the centre rises the "pendoppo," a great open pavilion, of which the lower part is in marble, and the sandal wood roof is covered inside with thousands of carved arabesques; while outside is imitated the sudden curves and numerous stories of a Chinese temple. To the right, in straight lines, with their faces to the earth, were the thirty-two sons of the Emperor, with great caps of blue stuff, diamond earrings, and blue skirts. To the left were some hundreds of brothers-in-law, cousins, and nephews. At the far end, on a sort of throne, was seated his Majesty Sousouhounan-Pakoe-Säidin-Panatogomo IX. He is twenty-eight years of age, with a graceful and fine figure, a pale green complexion, great wild-looking eyes, and enormous painted eyebrows. His head dress was black silk, with gold stripes; the tight-fitting robe was embroidered with gold, and covered with diamonds of the first water; at his side he wore various fanciful decorations, exquisite jewels, and the Cross of Commander of the Dutch Lion. The long glittering dress, the superb jewels in his hair, and his ears, on his hands and feet, and on his sword, the scabbard of which emitted the most brilliant reflections, made him shine like some enchanted living picture, and gave him at once an Oriental and effeminate appearance.

Twenty young attendants were standing behind, as though hoping to reflect a little of the glory of their great master; but the beauty of their dress consisted in its absence. Then four dwarfs and four buffoons, in the most eccentric attire, crouched down on their feet like china dogs. Infirm officials and state dancers, knots of mandarins in green, blue, and red, who were match-bearers, pocket-handkerchief-bearers, spittoon-bearers, tea-bearers, coffee-bearers, scent-bearers, and sweetmeat-bearers, sons born regularly at the rate of two a year, prostrate their naked bodies before the paternal sovereign. Cousins and nephews, amounting to three hundred, are related to this one father by the multiplicity of his marriages. Finally, some four thousand nobles and officers, extended on all fours, without uttering a sound, dare not raise their eyes to the "pen-doppo." Such was the strange scene presented to our dazzled eyes: this almost fabulous court which we saw while mounting the last step of the marble throne. We alone were permitted to stand in the midst of this human harvest thus mowed down at the master's feet.

The Resident, smothered in his collar and gold lace, then gave us a sign, and we proceeded to make a series of bows on all sides at regular intervals. Like good courtiers, we bent over as far as our spines would admit of, very much as though we were taken with violent fits of sneezing. It lasted a fearful time, and I could not help repeating to myself the words of one's childhood's game, "Great Mogul, I throw myself at your

feet, without laughing or crying." And, indeed, I did not laugh, but it was not for want of the will. Sousouhouan seated the Duc de Penthievre on his right hand, and the Resident on his left. Fauvel and I kept to the side opposite Panatogomo's two uncles, one of whom contracted his old brown face in the most fearful manner; it so happened that in an unlucky moment he had swallowed a bit of betel-nut the wrong way. While an attendant nymph presented a golden spittoon to the unfortunate man, who relieved himself with spitting, the Resident translated our compliments. The Sultan, then making play with his features with an ease that is possessed in the highest degree by all Oriental faces, replied that "the arrival of the Prince in his empire on the day of the birth of one of his sons was a token of good fortune to the infant, and that he would not let us go till we had touched it, so that our hands might bring it happiness." Then he made a slight sign with his finger to one of his sons, who, instantly lifting his head, literally crawled to his feet, and at a word ran to the guns, which were then fired.

Then, at the end of the great court, more than 300 yards from the throne, a scarlet door opened wide, and the hundred and fifty ambassadors from the Sultan of Djokjokarta advanced. The procession took an immense time to arrive; their eyes fixed on the ground, their chests exposed to the piercing rays of the sun, and crawling on hands and knees, the noble ambassadors of a neighbouring empire dragged themselves up to the pendoppo. Then, joining their hands together, and

placing them vertically against the nose, with the thumb on the mouth, they prostrated themselves five times, keeping marvellously in time with each other, and intoning their congratulations in a rhythmic cadence. The enumeration of the titles and possessions of the two emperors took three-quarters of an hour, and the congratulations on the birth of the thirty-third son were made in two minutes. Our friend Sousouhounan reverently read the letter, which was written on and enclosed in yellow silk, and expressed his thanks with a majestic gesture, which seemed completely to overpower all the deputies; their blue and white sugar-loaves (the sign which points out the noble race of the officers) still bent motionless to the ground.

A fresh sign from the Emperor brings forward the girls, who distribute drink, and who, on their knees at our feet, empty their singular amphoræ into chased golden goblets; and, for the glory of the Prophet, the good Mussulman swallows his ten glasses of port and claret.

But now the most exciting moment of our reception, already so extraordinary, arrived: we were to see the harem! Sousouhounan, wishing to surprise those he loves, for the first time allows Europeans to cross the sacred threshold of conjugal felicity. This was the order of the march:—

1st. The Sultan, giving one arm to the Prince and another to the Resident, with their immense umbrellas to shade them.

2nd. The maids of honour, three and three, like the

sculptor's Graces, carrying boxes sparkling with diamonds, and filled with matches, perfumes, and the thousand and one et ceteras required by the Emperor.

3rd. Fauvel and I, also under enormous umbrellas.

4th. The court officials in procession.

We were not long before we entered a most curious room, where our eyes fell upon a mass of gilding, and mats, and arabesques, and coloured and ornamented couches. In the midst of spiral stairs of sandal wood were niches with little altars, surrounded with hanging cups of odoriferous burning perfumes, half hidden by the smoke, which was wafted away in clouds. This room, which might have been some hundred and fifty yards long, seemed full of valleys and mountains; frightened women hid like flitting shadows in a perfect labyrinth of wainscoats carved in open work. But the Sultan called, and all the forty wives appeared before us. They were like very shiny wax dolls, their beauty consisting more in youth than in complexion, as they smiled beneath his glances and placed themselves in languishing attitudes; their beautifully moulded bosoms had no covering save strings of jewels, while rose-coloured skirts were fastened round their waists. I felt as though in a dream, with a vision of the Arabian Nights before me. But the crying of a child soon brought me back to earth, and proved that all was real: the thirty-third son was presented to us. He was as noisy and ugly as children of a day old are in all latitudes. We cordially shook him by the hand to impart the promised blessing, which made him cry ten thou-

sand times worse. The Sultan seemed delighted ; and numbers of curious servants put their heads in above the highly ornamented furniture, or between the bars of the winding stairs, which, covered with carved mythological subjects, rose to the ceiling.

Sousouhounan presented us to his mother, and to four other worthy old hags, who had also been the wives of his late father. Then it was his daughters' turn, of whom the greater number had nothing on but a set of diamond ornaments. It was no use our lavishing our sweetest smiles on them, our mere presence caused them such terrible fear. They are forty-eight in number ; so, the Sultan having been married at twelve years of age it gives an average of three daughters a year, added to the two sons.

Can anything be more curious than this kind of Asiatic stage, on which we see the performance, but find it impossible to get behind the scenes. It seems that some years ago the harem was four times as large as it is now ; but the Emperor—no doubt on strictly economical principles—suddenly made an enormous reduction in his establishment. And his friends, called upon to collect the sweepings of the seraglio, were doubtless delighted with what they got.

The Sultan showed his affection for his children by the caresses he lavished upon them. As for the condition of the women in Java, it is very low and degraded, and much to be deplored. From the age of ten or twelve a young girl becomes a mere *thing* in the hands of her owner, and, when her youth is gone, frequently

loses any position she may have had. The sensual nature of the man, solely influenced by outward and ephemeral objects, keeps them shut up for his pleasure, without letting himself be carried away by the moral and lovable charms which a woman hides deep in her heart, and not caring to enjoy the delights of refinement, tenderness, and true affection which spring therefrom. This is certainly the great horror of the East. In this palace, where women have been imported wholesale, so to speak, there is still a chief sultana; she is "ratou," and her first-born is heir to the throne; it was he who came to receive our blessings; and now I understand the universal joy of princes and people. You will allow that Sousouhouan was to be pitied, with thirty-two sons, and no legitimate heir to the throne!

After spending four hours in this sacred place, we bowed respectfully to the triple row of our host's wives, and bade farewell to this mysterious temple, which we never ceased to investigate with furtive glances. All the smiles vanished, and, led by Sousouhouan, we crossed colonnade after colonnade till we regained the outer world.

The Sultan gave his own cane to the Duc de Pen-thièvre, which was ornamented with a gold knob with his cipher of an E engraved on it, which in Javanese means IX: he is the ninth emperor of his family. Although his predecessors have seen the circle of their former possessions gradually decreasing in size, this one still reigns over a territory which surrounds his capital in a radius of sixty miles. It brings him in a profit of

some 120,000*l*. The Dutch, in virtue of an old treaty, pay him 5360*l*. per annum; and a thousand unknown sources mount up a revenue, at the amount of which no one can guess in this country, where the sultan is looked on as a god, and possesses everything to such an extent indeed that he has but to express a wish to possess the wife or daughter of any one of his subjects for her immediately to be given up; and the husband or father must consider himself highly honoured! And as it is the same with the sweat of labour, the fortunes of merchants, in short with the lives of nearly a million of men, who bow before this one will, there need be no control to his enjoyment, no bound to his wealth, no limits to his power.

I returned to our luxurious abode, thinking over all this Asiatic magnificence, which was still fresh in my mind, and which I had never expected to find half so fantastic or so amusing. This sacred city, in which Sousouhounan daily sees ten thousand of his subjects prostrate before him; where his wives adorn themselves, sing, and dance for him; where his children crawl beneath his feet like worms—I was only separated from this sacred place by battlements and minarets. But as we went along, some other battlements and bastions appeared on a little fort to the right. “What is that?” said I. “Nothing at all,” was the reply. “What do you mean by nothing?” “Nothing worth speaking about.” “But what is it?” “Oh, only a little fort, where there are five hundred Dutch soldiers to watch over the safety of the Europeans.” Indeed! there are

two Europeans, and five hundred soldiers, with a lieutenant-colonel in command, to defend them! I am quite aware that it is only a little corner which is occupied by the powerful neighbour.

“Mais lorsqu'on voit le pied, la jambe se devine.”

And this great and magnificent sultan does not seem to be quite so free as the Arab of the Desert. On one side is the Dutch fort, with its well armed garrison; on the other the independent Prince Mangkou-Negoro, with a private army trained in the European way, who is in every way assisted and encouraged to hold the demi-god of the Kraton in check. And then this demi-god, this magnificent sultan, cannot receive a single letter till it has first passed through the Residence; and every morning his captain of the guard, the handsome half-caste, comes to make a detailed and circumstantial report of everything that goes on in the palace.

In short, though all bow to the earth before his imperial majesty, and with the utmost humility express themselves unworthy to touch his very shoe-strings; and though all the glorifying pomp of the ostentatious adoration of the East is displayed at the feet of the master, still it is a fact that Sousouhounan-Panatagomo IX., the last surviving lion of Javanese rule, is surrounded with threads which prevent his soaring and bounding through the virgin forests where he formally reigned, and tearing asunder with revengeful claws the powerful trammels with which the victorious race has surrounded his island.

Returning home, we found letters from Europe, with which a courier had galloped hard all the way from Batavia. They were the answers to my first letters from Australia of the 25th July; and you can imagine how impatiently I had waited for them. I eagerly devoured them; and I feel highly honoured at your appreciation of my account of the flying fish, the savages, the gold-mines, and poor Burke. I can only hope that the worthy and prostrate Javanese, the rhinoceros that I missed, and the Sultan with his forty-eight wives, will be as well received. I cannot tell you how I long to have you with me when I am seeing all these wonderful and beautiful things, that we might enjoy them together.

The constant variety in our voyage, though rather fatiguing, is one of its great charms. There is no local tone about Australia, but the study of a new Europe created in a lifetime, is intensely fascinating, and our intercourse and interesting conversations with men speaking our language, accustomed to our ways, and using our sciences, was most agreeable.

Here we are lost in the midst of some twenty millions of men who do not understand us; whilst a luxurious vegetation and a mixed population present a picture so rich in colour that no brush could paint it. There we had discussions on political economy in a parliament formed of colonists; here it is more like a theatre, with extraordinary scenery and red, blue, and green mandarins. It is the preserved essence of Asia, instead of a puff of steam from Manchester. I wanted to talk to these Malays, examine into their hearts and

minds, learn their history, study their religion, and find out their wants. But I found that I was only grasping shadows. When on the other side of the tropics, I used my mind; here, I can do nothing but use my eyes. But I rather hope that, by setting my mind to it, I shall be able, before I leave this colonial empire, to gather a little knowledge, however vague and misty, so as to be able to put before you what I believe to be the moving spirit of this body of men, which is so full of brilliancy and colour, so thoroughly Asiatic, and so wonderful, the sight of which dazzles us each day.

I felt that I had already done a good day's work when I had seen four thousand people prostrate themselves, had read your letters and answered them. But some half-dozen attendants came to tell me that dinner was ready, and I did not think it would be courteous to be late, for I was to sit between two of the Sultan's sons. We were honoured with the company of three of them, besides eight other Javanese princes, all of whom, notwithstanding Mohammed, drank their champagne with much satisfaction. We were greatly amused with their stories, which the Resident kindly translated for us. My neighbour, who was only thirteen, told us that a short time ago the Emperor sent for him and said, "I am very much pleased with you, and I am going to make you a present. Here are four of my prettiest dancing girls for you." And once set off in this direction and kept going, I leave you to imagine whether our conversation did not become rather astonishing. Even at this early age, they have horses, houses, lands,

and a harem of their own. Haughty as Artabanus when let out, they become the humblest of creatures when under the paternal roof.

But their language is something wonderful. To begin with, four different ones are spoken in Java: Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, and Madourese. And in each of these are dialects differing from each other as much as Turkish does from English or Spanish. Dialect No. 1 is what the noble addresses to an inferior; dialect No. 2, an inferior to his equal; dialect No. 3, an inferior to a noble; dialect No. 4, a noble to his equal; and, finally, dialect No. 5, which a noble addresses to a prince, a Raden-Adiepatie, or a Ralifatolah.

As to their religion, they believe in nothing; they worship fetishes from some old superstition, but no more think of following the precepts of their creed than of becoming Christians. Harems, horses, and arms (formerly swords, now revolvers) are the end and aim of their existence; at least these were the only subjects which roused them during this eccentric dinner to some sharp witticism, to which greater emphasis was given by the alternately lively and dreamy expression of their countenances.

While listening to a distant band in the fort, which played Halévy's 'Charles VI.' for us, we put on some Chinese sashes, more than a yard wide, which the young princes brought us from the sultanas. We felt the gift all the more precious as the stuff had been woven by their own hands in the seraglio; and they are deliciously scented. Then they gave us some cigars a

foot long, rolled up in Indian corn leaves, and made of tobacco, opium, cinnamon, and nutmeg ; when we smoke them in our beautiful France, we shall imagine ourselves surrounded by the perfumes of the harem. Finally, the eldest of the thirty-three sons presented us with the photographs of his father and the rest of his family : can you imagine a greater contrast than between colodion and the Kraton ?

This evening's entertainment finished with great pomp in the opposite camp, where we again became the guests of Prince Mangkou-Negoro. He showed us, by the light of some hundred torches, horses with trappings in silver repoussé work, like the Javanese tournaments three hundred years ago ; halberdiers covered with bronze ; dresses for all occasions, dating back one or two centuries, and in which he had dressed some of his attendants ; lances exquisitely chased, whose point was a stork's beak ; krisses whose value would astonish the most extravagant of collectors ; and he gave each of us a tiger skin saddle-cloth.

Then, seated on a great marble terrace, surrounded by Javanese princes, decked in diamonds, blue head dresses, and red skirts, and to whom we bowed perpetually, we witnessed the "rondgings fandaks," or professional dancers. The Prince had taken into his head a charming fancy for giving us a regular lesson in ancient history ; so these dancers took us back, in their solemn pantomime, to the fabulous times of the heroic ages of the Malay country. Beneath their feet were spread various coloured mats on the marble floor. The

wooden bells of the *gammelang* emitted soft and languid tones; and the pretty, graceful girls of twelve years old, supple as serpents, entwined and wreathed themselves with the most Eastern movements. I have gradually become so accustomed to the languid softness, so monotonous, but so soothing, of these *bayadères* that I know the rapid music and the movement and excitement of our ballets would seem to me now like the madness of a carnival, and not the art of dancing.

But night is already far advanced, and in all reason I ought to put down my pen, notwithstanding the pleasure it gives me to note down at once for you the impressions of one of the most interesting days we have yet passed. If I had been told two years ago that I should see a sultan, his harem, and his prostrate people, I should have considered it a wild promise. To-night I am full of delight. The voyage and the country are so beautiful; the Oriental courts are so magnificent. I feel myself transported to another world, where the very perfumes are intoxicating, and the dresses sparkle like stars in the blue heavens. The luxurious vegetation, the brilliant light, the marble palaces, the fantastic dances, are a perpetual astonishment to one born in Europe.

CHAPTER XIX.

DJOKJOKARTA AND BORO-BOUDOR.

The eagerness of the populace and the policeman's staff — The worship of a tortoise — Fighting tigers — Nocturnal visit and picturesque surroundings of the Sultan — Majesty and impotence — Magnificent temple — Elastic bridges — Dutch customs — The necropolis of Ambarrawa — Luxury of a sultan's palace — Railway — A tiger's victim.

2nd December, 1866.—By five o'clock in the morning we lost sight of the minarets of the Kraton, and followed the road which leads to Djokjokarta, the capital in which the other sultan reigns; it is the name best known in the history of Java. From 1825 to 1830 the ensign of revolt floated triumphantly there. Prince Dipou-Negoro, who was guardian to a youthful Sousouhounan, was possessed of unbridled ambition, and held out against the Dutch forces, so that the latter only bought their triumph at the price of some 2,080,000*l.*, and the lives of 15,000 soldiers, of whom 8000 were Europeans. Now the most perfect peace reigns over these memorable fields of battle; rice plantations at regular intervals, sugar-canes, and indigo spread before our eyes. Native chiefs, proud Sicambres, who have bowed their heads to foreign yoke, galloped along at our side on

gaily decked horses. It was easy to see that they came of the old race; their type is quite different from the ordinary run of the people, with the hooked nose and high forehead, and there is a superiority in their manners that is quite striking. They pranced about in the most approved manner, so as to show off to the greatest advantage their graceful figures, their ancient krisses, and the diamond rings they wore: they were very charming—really well mannered. As to our horses, their paces are not brilliant. On the contrary, they rather hold back the carriage. Suddenly our magnificent equerries would start off as fast as they could go, in all directions, wildly distributing showers of blows with their “courbache” the whole length of the road, and stopping caravans of men carrying on their heads cocoa-nut oil contained in leather bottles, or indigo in vases. They apostrophised the children paddling about in the rice plantations, dashed into the hamlets hidden beneath the shade of banana trees, and, in short, made use of the entire population of these parts. Each of them came back with all the men he could collect, some of whom unmercifully beat the stumbling horses, others with wild yells gave vigorous and most useful helping hands to the carriage, which was thus pushed on a few steps, much against the will of the obstinate ponies. I forget who it was who was enumerating the various castes in Java to me the other day; but now I rather felt as if there were only two, “those who push, and those who are pushed!” You must know that, remembering the delicious gallops we had had over the

Australian plains, we had very much wished to make this journey on horseback. But here that was an impossibility; it would have been a lasting stain upon the honour of white men, who are obliged to go about like great people in carriages, which must be drawn by the population in crowds if the horses become restive. And indeed we went nearly all through the Emperor's territory drawn by men. Nothing could calm down the zeal of our rajahs and police, who, whether we would or no, thus tormented the people. We took ten hours doing twenty-one miles of the journey. It is true that the most delicious fruits were offered us on all sides, which a little quenched the fearful thirst from which we suffered beneath a burning sun. We were also easily able to see the rice harvest; the peasant women gather the rough golden ears one by one, carefully making them up into bunches, which the little children carry to the mortars, where the husk is removed. These reapers, whose garments were not, ran to look at us, and delighted us with their simplicity, stepping into the water to help us across the rivers.

Towards sunset we arrived at the ruins of Tjiambji-Seou (which means a thousand temples). Heaps of sculptured stones rise up on a square of ground of about 160 yards each way; several statues are still quite perfect: great, fat Buddhas, with a smile on the lips, and the soles of their feet in the air; they are at least seven or eight times the size of a man. We went up steps worthy of the Egyptian pyramids, into a dark, vaulted place like a belfry tower, where every

moment the stones threatened to fall on our heads. An old Buddhist, with a venerable long white beard, and amulets hung round his neck, lighted up with a small dim lamp the depths of niches containing groups of Buddhas, with four arms and elephants' or stags' heads. Presently some bats, as big as hens, extinguishing the lamp, we were enveloped in darkness, groping about at random; we had nothing to guide us but the clouds of fireflies which flew in bright swarms round these gigantic statues. In the mausoleum which turns to the Southern Cross is the statue of a woman, perfectly well preserved and complete, which commands a deep well at her feet. On the north side is a skull placed on an elephant's head; all these are mysterious relics of the fourth century.

A small Regent, very smart and spruce in silk stockings, joined us here by order of the Emperor; but Ak-Hem was quite unable to translate his mythological explanations. Although not able to enlighten our minds, the Regent still took care to light our path, and gave us a detachment of cavalry, who carried flaming torches before us. The surrounding country shone beneath another light: the indentated summit of Merapi, the great volcano that we have been skirting for a week, was outlined in colours of fire. On the opposite side the horizon was every moment aflame with lightning, which is to be seen each night in the tropics. Nearer, the rice plantations, arranged in steps, were all glowing with the phosphorescent light of clouds of moving fireflies, which reflect a sparkling

brilliancy in the stagnant water. Oh those fireflies! Some magnetic influence was constantly at work raising them, and letting them fall again in jerks like a rain of sparks; and we never ceased admiring the intensity of the light. It was late at night before we crossed the threshold of the ancient city of Djokjokarta; and there again the Residence was kindly thrown open to us.

December 3, 1866.—Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, we were kept up some time by the agreeable conversation of the Resident, M. Bosh, whose soldierlike appearance and deep-set eyes at once showed firmness of character and knowledge. Men of iron, gifted with special talents, are required to fill the post of resident in the Dutch Indies. The history of each of them is most interesting, for, although their power is almost uncontrolled, their work is harder than any in the world.

Between our two visits to live sultans, we wished to see the tombs of the dead ones, those glorious heroes of the ages of piracy, war, and revolt. Carriages with six horses took us noisily up to the door of the peaceful dwelling-place of the dead. In the midst of the cemetery is a marble basin, in whose deep waters lives the sacred tortoise. Offerings of rice and meat were prepared on the banks. The priest, crouching in the attitude of a man fishing with a line, holds balls of paste at the end of a stick for the sacred animal. A tortoise, especially when he is worshipped, takes a long

time making up his mind. And getting impatient, standing in the damp caused by heavy rain, a bright idea struck us, and we made one of the devotees stir up the depths of the water. Immediately the sacred beast appeared, white as ivory and three feet long, with open mouth, which the faithful worshippers reverently crammed.

In proportion as the Javanese like to have their houses open to the fresh air while they are alive, do they love to shut up their sepulchral abodes with a close cover. The roof nearly reaches the ground, and we almost had to crawl on hands and knees to get into the room where the coffins are kept. The chief of Mataram and the first king of that line preside over this meeting of death. Hundreds of tombs are arranged along the walls, covered with white cloths held up by a scaffolding; they look like rows of beds in an hospital.

In the afternoon we had a considerably enlarged edition of our reception of the day before yesterday. The imperial Kraton of Djokjokarta is on the same plan as that of Sourakarta. It contains five thousand more worshippers; but apart from that, there is the same succession of palaces, pagodas, terraces, colonnades, arabesques, and pendoppoos. We were honoured with the same procession beneath umbrellas, and there was an equally pompous walk to the threshold of the harem. The day before yesterday we thought it very extraordinary to arrive on the day of the birth of an imperial prince; but I am not sure that it is not more astonish-

ing when one pays a visit to the husband of so many wives to find a day when no birth is registered.

I spare you an account of this last reception, because it is too like the first; though a thousand new details excited my curiosity in the midst of so much magnificence, and I enjoyed it as I should an opera which I went to hear a second time, so as to appreciate the charms which I had already half taken in at the first hearing.

When we left the harem, we went to see the tigers, which are kept shut up in great wooden buildings and reserved for fights on the Sultan's fête day. It must be a very fine sight. The army is formed in four rows in the largest court belonging to the palace, and six young princes, called "the six heroes of the sun," with golden helmets and naked to the waist, bravely cut the cords which fasten the door of the great cage, and show their courage by not retreating before the tiger, except in a kind of dance of death to the sound of cymbals. Then the fierce-eyed beast rushes against the wall of men bristling with lances, and finally falls howling and pierced through. Sometimes a wild buffalo is let in against the tiger; then the fight becomes desperate, and struggles are awful. At the last fête the most fearful moment was also rather ludicrous. Attacked and conquered by the buffalo, the tiger bounded some twenty feet into the air above the lances into a cocoa-nut tree. There, according to custom on a first night in the tropics, some thirty natives were in an elevated position amongst the branches of this tree;

in one and the same moment they let themselves fall, like ripe fruit from a tree that is shaken, and, thanks to their monkey-like nature, not one was hurt.

The tigers that we saw had only been shut up for a fortnight; the Sultan had summoned half the population of the province to surround them in a swamp.

Oh how different they did look from the sleepy animals in our zoological gardens! As soon as they saw us, and smelt "fresh meat," they threw themselves the whole length of their cage, some eighteen or twenty feet, and furiously grasped the wooden bars which held them prisoners, and which shook under their touch; their fierce eyes, their long claws, and loud roaring were terrific. We could not stand it long, the smell was so awful of decomposing carcases and flesh of dogs and sheep, which were thrown whole into the cage and of which piles still remained beneath their feet. But we had time to admire the beauty of a royal tiger when there is still some spark of the enthusiasm of his life of freedom about him.

The Sultan had become quite intimate with us before he bid us farewell. You have only got to look at his portrait to be convinced of it. He is fat and jolly-looking, and wears a head-dress which makes him look as if he wore donkey's ears made of cardboard; but his eyes are very intelligent. Though very stiff before his people, and in the court ceremonies, he is otherwise extremely natural and sociable, and comes secretly to play whist and drink burgundy at the Resident's. He is rather bored by a great aunt, who always abuses him

for his love for the white men, and very often he is tempted to send her off, but she is immensely rich, and he is her heir if he behaves himself. So even a sultan in Java must be civil to his aunt, and enjoys a lark ten thousand times more when it is forbidden fruit.

I left the Kraton with regret, feeling that it was very unlikely I should ever see such magnificence again. I should like to have had you with me, so as to show you each detail. A palanquin passes out from beneath a portico, carried by four coolies with strong limbs and shoulders like bronze, walking in step. Four blue and yellow umbrellas shade the young princess, who sits carelessly in this light box. Behind her trots a party of children, some richly dressed in silk, and decked out with necklaces twisted twenty times round their necks and bracelets of red gold; others not the least ashamed of being quite naked, like little cherubs made of gingerbread. But while we were looking at the graceful attitudes of this merry laughing group, they disappeared suddenly, and nothing was left us but a battalion of Djokjokartians, who seemed as if saying, "European, this is a princess of the blood of Mataram; she is returning to the harem where she reigns supreme by reason of her beauty and her charms; and our long pikes ornamented with sharks' teeth, our ebony clubs and iron-wood tomahawks, suffice to show you that you will not enter here."

And turning round, I had nothing to look at save wooden idols with golden moustaches and silver breasts, to whom the faithful offered up incense, and fruits and

chickens painted red, shut up in light round baskets, so that only their heads and tails were out.

Such was the walk that led us back to the Residence. On the threshold of the Kraton we thanked the high dignitaries who had been honoured by carrying the official umbrellas above our heads, and then gladly walked along the beautiful avenues trained in bowers, where hung the "duryans," a fruit like an elongated melon, the well known "jack," and the "loaves" of the bread tree. This continuous garden led us, as at Sourakarta, in front of a fort holding five hundred Dutchmen, the *guard of honour* of Ralifatolah VI., and then to Pangheran-Adiepatie-Sourio-Ningrat IV., who is the independent prince corresponding to Mangkou-Negoro. But he is no one in particular; although he wears the uniform of a lieutenant-colonel with as soldierlike an air as any man in Holland, he only commands now five hundred infantry and seventy cavalry. He is but the shadow of an opposing power, the germ of a bugbear of independence, and the chief in name alone of an hereditary opposition. One could almost think that Louis XI. had arrived here through a series of some two hundred and fifty transmigrations, for the famous motto of "govern by dividing" was never more clearly applied.

The young Prince is very jealous of his harem, and only let us see it from afar. Only the so-called chief sultana was summoned to receive our homage. She is thirteen; little golden wings stood upright in her ebony hair; in the much-scented group that formed her suite was a queer little albino Malay. After seeing the

beauty of the women, from which heavy hanging lips and squinting eyes detract most terribly, we looked over the collections of lances and krisses, and then at a manuscript, beautifully bound in solid gold picked out with precious stones, in which is inscribed the genealogical annals of the "holy" family of the Sourio for four hundred years. At Bali it is only a few years since the native prince gave up the old custom which obliged him to marry his sisters, so that the royal stock might be perfectly unmixed. At Java, too, the aristocracy is not only a political institution but a part of their religion; and we were equally struck with the inherent nobility of our host as with the sincere veneration with which the people look up to them on all sides.

We were sitting on the steps of the terrace smoking cigars a foot long, with which the Sultan had presented us, when suddenly a brilliant light appeared at the end of the dark avenue. It increased, and the flickering of innumerable torches lighted up the beautiful clumps of tropical vegetation. One by one the trees emerged from the darkness as they were illuminated by the flaming rosin; and the uncertain shadows of a crowd, which, late as it was, filled the avenue, bowed to the earth as the procession passed by. There were dragoons in scarlet cloth, lancers in green with flowing skirts; then came six dun-coloured horses, urged on by out-runners in white laced with gold, who ran from side to side and darted in and out. It was the Sultan, who courteously came to pay the Prince a visit.

It is far past midnight; the last torches are disappearing from amongst the leaves; a silence falls on all around, and I am writing to you on my marble terrace, inhaling the fresh breezes of the night, intoxicated with the novelty of my life.¹

December 4, 1866.—To-day we returned to the Dutch territory. As you will perceive, we go through the interior of this fairy-like isle at full speed; once only excepted, we never stopped more than thirty-six hours at each stage. The constant change of air helps to keep off fever, which is the inseparable companion of the traveller in these regions; and perhaps also the beauty of the scene is enhanced by the rapidity of our journey, as the light of the fireflies in the virgin forest seems more lovely when they are seen in masses than when examined separately. The imperial territories which we had left were like independent islands rising out of a sea, which is subject to Holland. These islands, which contain each a million of men, and are volcanic ground wherein smoulder both the subterranean fires of nature and the fires which are increased by the spirit of conquest, are the last oases where the old race of the former possessors of the Malay Islands can take refuge; and how full they must be of secrets—

¹ It is just as well we did not take up our abode in this enchanting spot. On the 30th June, 1867, seven months after we passed through, a frightful earthquake destroyed the houses and swallowed up the inhabitants. The most violent shock was felt at Djokjokarta, where a thousand people were killed.

on one side of stifled hatred and of suppressed ambition, while on the other of victorious stratagem and silent victory. Beneath the outward pomp of barbaric magnificence or seeming difference, there is as much masquerading in the midst of the intoxicating perfumes of the seraglio as in the administration of public affairs. One would think at first sight that these two rafts, as it were, buoyed up above the universal shipwreck of the Javanese sultans, must gradually be submerged by the rising tide which has covered the rest of Java, Timor, Bali, Macassar, and Borneo. But, at least in my humble opinion, they are, on the contrary, pledges which their conquerors have raised all the higher that they are powerless, so as to gild over the great compact which unites the subject race to their conquerors as much by force as by love. A judicious system of pretended moderation and voluntary respect towards the last shadow of dethroned majesty, which a single cannon-shot would suffice to destroy, seems to be the key to the relations between the colonial government and the so-called independent sultans. And consideration for two princes insures the gratitude and servility of twenty million natives.

The province of Kadou bounds the little empire of Djokjokarta on the west. Whenever we admired the beauties of nature on our way from Batavia here, we were always told that at Kadou we should find the paradise of Java. The rounded hill-tops of this mountainous and volcanic country are covered with virgin and impenetrable forests; halfway down the

sides of the hills are coffee plantations, arranged in straight lines like the beds of a kitchen-garden; and in the valleys vanilla and indigo is grown. But the harmony of these peaceful scenes was painfully interrupted by our escort drawing their swords to frighten the people, who bowed humbly before us, but became at times rather refractory when obliged to push the wheels up steep inclines.

It is impossible to conceive the delightful sensations which we experienced at each step, without seeing the marvellous verdure of the tropics, the vegetation which is so fresh and moist even beneath the burning sun, the gigantic entanglement of creepers and bamboos, and the high mountains covered to the very summit with masses of foliage. At last, passing over a very curious hill which is in shape a flattened cone, and covered with teak wood, called the "Java Nail" (the natives declare that it is the centre of the island), we arrived at Magelang, the capital of the province. We immediately went to call on the Resident, but a gold-laced official told us he was ill. On our asking what was the matter, we were informed that he had caught cold. Good heavens! it really is something to boast of. As for us, we could not have perspired more freely if we had been kept in the boiler of a steam engine for three weeks.

5th December, 1866.—The Regent of these parts, Raden-Toumongong-Danou-Kousoumo, a prince equally distinguished in manners and appearance, took us in his carriages to the temple of Boro-Boudor, which is

some miles off. This building stands on an even mound, in the centre of a large valley, which encircles it like a belt. Far off on the horizon, like the embrasures of a natural fortification, rise the summits of extinct volcanoes, and here the leaders of the Hindoo invasion constructed this colossus in honour of Buddha.

From a distance this monument looks like a bell. It is about 80 feet in height, and 630 feet in diameter. On a nearer approach, the eye is struck by some hundreds of statues of Buddha, dotted about from the foot to the summit on the parapets of seven galleries one above the other, forming the steps of the massive pyramid, which, though built without cement, is wonderfully well preserved. Each statue of Buddha, of which there are five hundred and fifty-five, of heroic size, is protected by a cupola, carved in open work out of the stone. There is not one stone left uncarved; so there are some 4000 extensive subjects, highly finished and finely marked, rich both in detail and general effect. In short, it is a magnificent pyramid decked out and ornamented, used as a huge stand for idols, protected by arches of stone lacework, which are placed on the extreme end of each terrace, like sentinels over modern prisons; and on the walls is spread a gallery of sculpture, representing a continuous succession of curious episodes.

We were greatly amused at being able to trace out an elephant hunt, a rhinoceros hunt, when Mohammed's

huntsmen proved more fortunate than the followers of St. Hubert; a battle, and then a wreck on some coral reefs. In the latter one almost fancied one could really see the sailors swimming about in the sea, after falling from the height of the broken masts. Then came more peaceful arts, the various branches of cultivation, with exactly the same plough that the Javanese use now. So that in eleven centuries there has not been a shadow of improvement in the most necessary of all implements, namely, farming implements. An agricultural committee would bring about a revolution here. Finally, my head was filled by a thousand other pictures, such as the marriage ceremony (considerably dwelt upon), the creation of man, the tempting serpent, the Deluge, &c., reminding us forcibly of our own Bible History.

Four fine staircases, with one hundred and fifty steps in each, led us to the crowning cupola, a beautiful little chapel, of which the dome is formed of stones supported by their own weight. In imitation of a native, I climbed up on to the knees of the god, and, stretching out one arm, I was able to pinch his ear, which, according to the Javanese superstition, ensures a run of good luck. But although I am not generally seized with intense admiration for monuments which speak not to the mind, but the curiosity, of the stranger, I could not help being struck at seeing that the statue of the god was unfinished, and was far from attaining to the perfection of the bas-reliefs. The Regent ex-

plained to us that "the image of the supreme ruler of the world was purposely left unfinished, it not being considered right that the hand of man should presume to produce in a material form the divine features." This deep and truly philosophical thought in connection with the making of an idol seemed at the same time appropriate and contradictory, both primitive and refined, strange and fascinating.

Judging by the minuteness of detail which was to be combined with the huge features just commenced, what years of work it would have taken to finish such an undertaking. Now there are around it no worshippers, no inhabitants even; the passion for it is over; of former ages one trace only is left, which neither time nor desertion have been able to destroy—the stones.

On the other hand, on the platform which must be crossed to arrive at the foot of the sacred building, and which is shaded with the most luxuriant avenues of venerable trees, we found the tents of overseers and civil engineers, who were bending over maps some four yards square, where they were washing in the minute plans of a land survey. Thus, by the side of the remains of the Hindoo invasion, were the scientific and useful appliances of the European conquest. At this head-quarters of the commercial land survey staff, each corner of the ground is reproduced on paper. The various colours represent the different produce of European or native cultivation. The officials divide the ground like a cake into various squares, designed,

one for coffee, another for sugar; this for vanilla, and that for the rice necessary for the nourishment of the community. This is the chessboard on which Holland plays a safe game with the greater part of the spices which bring her in about two million and a half per annum.

Our friend the Regent occasionally tried to talk French to us, and we tried to understand him. He took us to his pendoppo and his dalem, gave us his portrait, and presented us to his numerous wives; but there is no longer anything out of the way in a harem to us.

6th December, 1866.—I recollect a print representing the beauties of the imperial possessions: Buonaparte on the heights of the Alps showing his astonished soldiers the lovely plains of Italy. A view as marvellously real as that picture is exaggerated showed us in one sweep all the cultivated ground of Java, as we crossed the chain of mountains above which tower the volcanoes of Soumbing and Suidoro (13,500 feet and 10,200 feet in height), and the plain of Ambarrawa appeared before us in so beautiful an effect of light that words are wanting in which to describe it. The ground was still steaming, but refreshed after the effects of a storm, whose heavy clouds were flying away behind us; the tangled offshoots of coffee trees separated us from the mosaic of vegetation which was spread out many thousand feet beneath the cliff on which we stood; green waves of sugar-cane formed

a sea of verdure; yellow palings marked the boundaries of little gardens, where quinine, tea, nutmeg, cloves, pepper, and cinnamon were carefully cultivated; it looked like the coloured sails of an Oriental fleet.

When a great panorama like this appeared suddenly in sight while we were skirting a hill, it seemed as though nature were rejoicing in the power of heaping together all that was most beautiful beneath the brightest light: below, a luxuriant vegetation; above, indentated volcanoes. There was something in all this which filled our hearts with a sensation of the superhuman. "We shall see once more palaces and pagodas, storms and gold mines," I said to myself; "but shall we ever be permitted again to behold so rich and peaceful a landscape, with its magnificent and tropical vegetation?" If any man exists who is insensible to the beauties of nature, let him come here, and he will be dumb with admiration. But it would be useless for a painter to attempt to do justice to such a scene: no palette could produce colours sufficiently brilliant; no perspective could give an idea of the depth of those mountains of flowers.

At one time it took ten of the pink cattle to drag us up the winding road of the hill; a troop of boys, with airs of great importance, twisted the cords that were fastened through the nostrils of the poor beasts; but the only result was that they reared furiously and sprung about wildly from side to side without paying any attention to the precipice. Evidently the crea-

tures wanted to join their friends who were sleeping or swimming in the lakes of the valleys above which we rose. They are passionately fond of the water; with their muzzles and horns alone rising above the surface of the slight waves they stir up, they remain whole days, with an expression of the most indolent, intense enjoyment. If they can find some muddy swamp, they roll about in herds. Then when the children go to fetch them for work, they lead them to the limpid streams, and there sometimes three or four quite naked astride on one animal, they clean them in the ravines, whose lovely lakes are all green with *Victoria regias*, and pink with the lotus flower.

Further on, our ponies galloped at full speed down the slope of the mountains, but it was not done without some risk. Some very curious bridges crossed the numerous torrents and deep ravines which cut across the road: not a nail is used in their construction. Two ropes of bamboo bark are thrown across the ravine parallel to one another, and fastened to the tops of the largest cocoa-nut trees. At distances of about a foot, slight twists of creepers are fastened, which, falling down like the strings of a harp, become entangled in a trellis work, a kind of flexible plait of bamboo, which forms the extremely thin floor of this curious bridge. Over this our royal outrunners urged on the horses with all possible speed. The elasticity of this cage of reeds is the only thing which makes it safe. The moment we were launched upon it, everything bent beneath our weight; the whole bridge

shook, shrank together, and seemed to give way; the upright creepers were drawn out, the dry bamboo sticks knocked against one another so suddenly that it sounded like file firing. Thousands of swallows build their nests¹ beneath the verdant carpet which our horses stirred up like the waves of a lake, and flew off in clouds, twittering and screaming. We, who were the cause of all these cries and fears, felt rather as though we were back in an Australian mine, into which you are let down by your own weight after putting one foot into a loop of rope; we seemed to be plunging into the ravine, with outrunners, ponies, and carriage, and then suddenly returned to dry land with a sensation of giddiness, from swinging about as though in a hammock.

We were carried away down the incline, and arrived in the plain much faster than we cared for. On the way we met M. Musschenbrok, the overseer of Ambarawa, who came in person to our assistance, rather expecting to find us at the foot of some precipice. An agreeable scholar, and a dauntless sportsman, he is a man greatly to be envied. He has killed fourteen tigers, four wild bulls, and one hundred and thirty-one wild boars! He told us of the hand-to-hand fights he had had with the savage inhabitants of the woods, and how he had ascended nearly all the volcanoes in the island. It seems that the "Slamat" is the Bois de

¹ These nests are so much prized as food by the Chinese that they come all the way to Java to get them.

Boulogne of the rhinoceroses (we were a little consoled on finding that they had escaped him as they did us). They are attracted by the smell of the craters, and have dug regular trenches in the lava, where the Indians arrange traps. When the latter are lucky enough to catch one of these monsters, they only keep the horn from the nose, which sells for an enormous sum; and I am told that a cure for the bite of a serpent is made from them.

M. Musschenbrok brought his son to see us, the most charming child I ever saw, about ten years old, whom he is bringing up in the Javanese fashion, that is to say, naked from head to foot, so as to strengthen him against the pestilential consequences of this climate, which is so unhealthy for young constitutions. The child braves the hottest sun without a hat, and sleeps on a mat in the verandah, and has thus survived many others who like him were born here, but who, poor little things, have been pitilessly cut down by fever and dysentery. Already the boy can climb a cocoa-nut tree with the cat-like facility of a native, or creeping into the jungle, take a serpent by the tail with one hand, and slip the other up to its head with lightning speed. This will prove to you that, unlike the English in the Indies, the Dutch try to assimilate their customs with those of the natives; and, according to their statistics, it is certain that they have reduced by four hundred per cent. the mortality by which their imprudent neighbours are cut down. The consumption of roast beef and spirits in supernatural quantities is notorious in

India, and has become a proverb. Here, on the contrary, the sobriety of the conquering race struck us very forcibly, and it may be truly said that none fall here save those who are fated to do so. We easily got accustomed to this way of living; and I am certain that in the last month the three of us have not eaten more than five shillings' worth of meat (I leave out the cock which cost us 1*l.* 12*s.* at Samadang), and drunk sixteen shillings' worth of wine. Mountains of plain boiled rice, with quantities of spices and curry for stimulants, and a few wholesome fruits to refresh us, enabled us to travel fifteen hours a day, while all the Europeans were taking their siestas, and to avoid night journeys, which some travellers make who are afraid of the sun. Does not it seem the height of absurdity to visit the most beautiful country in the world, 9000 miles from Europe, only to see it at night, in other words, not to see it at all?

But Dutch manners, which are certainly not fashionable, have been greatly condemned by the English, who even in Tankoubanprahou would doubtless appear in faultless stiff collars. The utmost negligence is to be seen here. At about five or six o'clock every day you meet, either in the streets or in the verandahs which border them, officials who show their rank by the gold lace on their caps, and the heat from which they suffer by their white garments, which flutter about with all the careless ease of night-dresses. Their wives hang on their arms, with flowing hair, their bare feet thrust into babouches, scantily draped

with a short sarrong and a single floating "cabaya." The faces are all deadly pale; and the languid eyes express increasing feebleness. The fever undermines their health, and the heat of the sun kills them. Yet, fascinated by that indescribable something which is so intoxicating in the tropics, attracted by the languid softness of creole life, and lulled by a half-sleep and half-delirium which is but the beginning of death, they love Java, the magnificence of their palaces, the semi-royal power of their husbands or their sons, and the arena in which all manly power can be developed, and they sacrifice their health to their duty.

7th December, 1866.—We are in a marshy gorge, which commands the Merabou. From here any foreign invasion could penetrate into the heart of Java, or the Sultans of Sourakarta or Djokjokarta, raising the standard of revolt, could make a fatal eruption, and take back their possessions on the coast. So, to bar the way, the Dutch have tried to erect fortifications and barracks.

To begin with, there is the fort of Banjou-Birou (Bluewater), which was begun in 1857; the strongest work that engineers could construct, not only in barracks, powder magazines, and watch towers, but also in casemates, double ramparts, and bastions. It is a gigantic work; the very name expresses some of its difficulties. As pile was added to pile, and stockade to stockade, every night the water rushed in and swallowed up the day's work. Bundles of bamboos

and trunks of teak trees were thrown in to the depth of eighteen feet, before there was any resistance to the pioneers' hammers, and the venomous exhalations killed the sappers whilst using their axes. Finally, science and, above all, perseverance triumphed over an unsteady and rebellious soil. Perhaps the corpses and bones of the heroic workmen of the colony helped to consolidate the mud into which the piles were driven; but when men, whose numbers they refused to tell us, and 2,800,000*l.* had been entombed at the foot of the mountain, this bold fort, a perfect necropolis, rose up to defy invaders as well as rebels. If only those noble pioneers who succumbed to this work could rise from their graves, and join the living who now occupy Ambarrawa, the forts would no longer be able to hold so many defenders, and the enemy would not dare to attack the impenetrable ranks.

The plans were sent out from the mother-country, which chose to erect this barrier against all obstacles, but the traveller crossing the plain of Ambarrawa cannot but be struck with the facility with which a very small troop of artillery could destroy these forts by attacking them from the buttresses of the mountains which touch them, and are undefended. And after all their labour, they did not even have to wait for a cannon shot. On a fine night on the 16th July of the past year, a low rumbling noise was heard; the columns swayed like pendulums, the walls cracked, the guns were overturned, and the startled garrison, thinking the end of the world was come, threw themselves against

the locked doors. The shrieks of women and children (who always abound in the barracks of Java) were heard amidst the killed and dying, above the incessant falling and breaking of everything. The volcano of Merabou was in a state of eruption, and for more than a quarter of an hour undermined the solid granite foundations. We were greatly interested and excited in going over these ruins with the officers who had been witnesses of the scene, and were able to give us the fearful details. It was impossible not to shudder at the sight of leaning walls, the bent columns, the huge stones that had been torn up, and the ground which had been rent by volcanic shocks.

We left the Banjou-Birou fort to see the real fort of Ambarrawa, which is a fine collection of officers' houses, barracks, and hospitals, built in the year 1831; innumerable cracks, showing that the building was splitting everywhere, obliged them to pull down the upper stories. On laying down to rest at night, there is always the fear that they will wake beneath ruins. Nevertheless, three thousand men occupy this post.

Thus without waiting for a great struggle, with opposing guns, they have already succumbed to three merciless enemies—the fever of the swamps, which killed the men; the muddy water, which sucked in the foundations; and the subterranean fires, which destroyed the walls. But the colonial army, officered by the bravest of men, and with a most varied and curious set of soldiers, keeps up its character of patience throughout all trials, and unflinching spirit.

A barrack in Java is a curious sight. In the ranks are fair Dutchmen, yellow Malays, and black Africans, most of whom are adventurers from all over the world, who came on here after the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. Accustomed to be under fire, which good habit is kept up by constant small expeditions into the Archipelago, these soldiers win the admiration of their officers in time of war, who, therefore, help to make their life easier and pleasanter in times of peace. We had seen numbers of them on the roads in the interior, each man travelling with his wife and child. The barrack seemed to me at first to be a school, it swarmed so with little bare children playing about in the dust, and then like a workshop, where Malay women were established in the mess-rooms in which all nations collected, polishing the buttons of the uniforms, which they did equally for white men, Africans, with bodies black as ebony, and stalwart Turks, with their fierce glances, who looked always ready for battle. Altogether, it is a very original state of affairs, with a combination of all colours, and very curious as a whole. The authorities, with unnecessary good nature and condescension, approve and encourage a polyandria which is under military rule, and in a different proportion in times of peace or war—a monstrous and universal intercourse, which ought not to escape the severest censure, under any pretext or in any climate.

Luckily for him, Cato never visited this beautiful island, for it certainly would have shortened his life. Although we were not equally afraid of apoplexy, we

went on our way at full speed, in a heat that nearly killed us, and I am now writing from Ounarang, beneath the volcano of that name. The subterranean fires do not trouble us, but, instead, the waters of heaven fall in torrents on our modest bamboo hut, and come through the roof, which at this moment acts as a sieve; so I shall hastily bring my notes to a conclusion, holding an umbrella in one hand over my table which is *pede claude*, and a peacock's feather pen in the other.

December 8, 1866.—One day's journey brings us back to Samarang, the end of our travels in the interior. Six hundred miles at full speed, through new scenes, with more kindnesses shown us every moment, enchanted our minds as much as they fatigued our bodies beneath the tropical sun. It seems quite odd not to have to get up at four to-morrow morning, and instead to be able to enjoy the delights of the residence for two days. There are no commonplace decorations on stucco walls, no doors or hangings to keep out the fresh sea breezes, no European furniture in this Asiatic palace. The brilliancy of the marble is only relieved by two immense carpets, made of a hundred tiger skins; and, glancing down white colonnades, the only things that arrests the eye are clumps of exquisite tropical vegetation.

At dinner time, the servants in native full dress, stand in rows on the steps of the outside staircase. Carriages drawn by ponies drive up quickly, and the

general in command alights, followed by a brilliant staff, whose gold-laced uniforms and clanking swords mingle with the Oriental magnificence of these galleries. Soon the glass reflects a thousand lights, and we collect around a table fit for a king. The scars of many wounds are on the bronzed foreheads, burnt beneath the suns of Borneo, Bali, Macassar, and Timor, witnessing to the gallant deeds of our agreeable hosts. You can imagine how we enjoyed hearing their adventures. One told me about the war in Bali, where King Klong-Klong gloriously defended himself for so long. The honour of subduing the whole of this beautiful island fell to the lot of Michiels, "the tiger-hearted colonel;" he died gallantly in action, at the decisive moment of victory. Another gave me the details of forced marches in the jungle, and in pestilential swamps, against enemies armed with poisonous arrows. After a night's skirmish, one of the officers heard fearful cries, and running to see what had happened, he found twelve wounded men, who had fallen into a kind of pit, where they were fighting against a positive herd of crocodiles, who had already torn them limb from limb, and were fighting over the remains.

9th December, 1866.—My room in itself is a perfect palace—a charming room for a ball; it opens on various terraces, from which the views are exquisite. A troop of servants crouch at my door, ready at a sign to run about and do what I tell them. But I do not

trouble them much; I walk about over the marble floor, enchanted with the coolness, and twenty times a day I plunge into a bath, which is close to the mats that serve for a bed, and which is filled with fresh running water, and large enough to swim in easily. A mounted policeman brought me a packet which had arrived by the last European mail. I wondered what friend was sending me a book from the Boulevards to surprise me amongst this Eastern pomp. It was 'L'Affaire Clémenceau!' I hastened back into my drawing-room lake, and began to read this fascinating book, which roused me from the calm that had seemed to smile on me. I do not suppose many of its other readers were so like Hassan when—

"L'on entendait à peine au fond de la baignoire
Glisser l'eau fugitive, et d'instant en instant
Les robinets d'airain chanter en s'égouttant.

10th December, 1866.—*The First Railway in Java.*—

And now, these picturesque plains, these beautiful valleys, these wild mountains, where we have seen rhinoceroses galloping, and serpents creeping, where we have had all the amusement and adventures of travelling in carriages like kings, now, they are going to be cut through by two prosaic railways, like European ground! I can only be thankful that I accomplished the journey in the old fashion; and by-and-by I shall be saying, like the old people of the present day, "Ah! in my time, how charming it was! how primitive! what a local tone there was about it!" But, was it reality or imagination? During the seventeen miles we have just

travelled, the country seemed less wonderful, the villages passed before my eyes in a confused mass of trees and men; the virgin forests looked like green shadows, with no detail; the gorges, pink with lotus flower, seemed to have lost their romance; and the harnessed buffaloes no longer looked as though they toiled.

We began by visiting the works of the station, which is situated on the sea-shore, in the midst of swamps and unwholesome mud. The foundations, which they were obliged to build of concrete, cost immense sums of money. The directors and engineers of the company, some in Indian helmets and white dresses, others in high hats and black coats, did the honours of the line to the Prince. We were in a workman's carriage which was drawn as far as the rails extended by an engine displaying the French colours. We were often obliged to go very slow, as the unsteady soil has sucked in the piles about twenty times; and the road is not quite firm yet. We did not stop till we got the foot of the chain of hills, where the four volcanoes rear their conical forms against the soft blue of the sky.

The expenses have already risen to 400,000*l.*, and as it will be necessary to attack the steep sides of the mountain, the passage over it will cost 1,120,000*l.* The main line will lead from the seaport of Samarang to Sourakarta; the incline is one in thirty, and there are a good many viaducts and tunnels. The second portion of the line, which was imposed on the company by the government, will join the sea-coast to Ambarrawa,

which was meant to be the centre and key of the great line of defence which covers the island.

As to the traffic, it is sure to be on the very largest scale; the railway cuts a straight line through the most inhabited part of the country, rich in coffee trees, sugar canes, and especially magnificent forests of teak-wood, which have not yet been explored. When any one has seen, as we have, caravans of 700 or 800 coolies, carrying sacks of coffee, balanced on the two ends of a bamboo stick, which cuts into their shoulders; and when, by the side of these streams of running porters, they meet 400 beasts of burden bending beneath their loads, and then some 200 carts, drawn by buffaloes, and filled with cocoa-nut oil, vanilla, cinnamon, quinine, and tea, and a thousand other products, it is almost impossible to understand how it is that for fifteen years this slow and difficult process has been permitted to continue instead of being replaced by steam transport. But it seems that there was a long and obstinate struggle before the final concession of the Government could be obtained. Private interests, personal ill-wills, and the obstinacy of conservatives, who saw in the introduction of railways a sign of new reforms and the overthrow of monopoly, exercised a deplorable influence in this affair, to the detriment of the public interests. And although the petitioners did triumph, thanks to their boldness and perseverance, they risked considerable dangers, for the Government only guaranteed the interest of the funds required for the enterprise on

condition of a branch being carried on to the fort, which has since* proved to be a terrible drag on the growth of the main line.

But this germ of a railroad will be able to exist not so much by its own power as by the marvellous productiveness of the country which supports it. I tried to get an accurate notion of the resources of the three little neighbouring provinces, Samarang, Kadou, and Sourakarta, which a line of rails less than 125 miles long is sufficient to join from centre to centre, and whose wealth will be transported to the quay of the port, where it will be embarked in six hours instead of six weeks. I have been able to extract a few figures from the enormous masses of printed statistics, collected in the library of the Residence, of the year 1863, though naturally I had some difficulty in understanding the *Aanwijzing-Betrekkelijk, Uitgestrektheid, Maatshappij*, and *Getal Inkoopskoffijpakhuizen*, of the official headings.

The Residence of Samarang contains 1,021,038 inhabitants, of whom 4000 are Europeans and 12,000 Chinese, 194,000 buffaloes, 37,000 oxen, and 13,000 horses. The chief cultivation of the soil produces 101,325 picols¹ of sugar, 467 picols of tobacco, 109,325 picols of coffee, growing on 48,853,276 coffee trees, and 3,392,079 picols of rice.

Kadou has 491,333 inhabitants, of whom only 211 are Europeans, and 3000 are Chinese. They possess

¹ A picol is equal to 130lbs.

68,000 buffaloes, 94,000 oxen, 28,000 horses, and produce 32,000 lbs. of indigo, 74,296 picols of coffee, from 22,000,000 trees, and 911,664 picols of rice.

The imperial territory of Sourakarta contains 713,000 inhabitants, 47,000 buffaloes, 41,000 oxen, and 6000 horses, and annually produces 71,878 lbs. of indigo, 92,719 picols of sugar, 484,926 lbs. of tobacco, and 67,406 picols of coffee.

Imagine what a new source of wealth will be opened to this country when over 2,000,000 porters (for all the Javanese are liable to forced labour) and more than 500,000 beasts of burden and draught horses, who painfully carry some 4,000,000 tons of merchandise, will be replaced by steam-engines and carriages. Then the porters will be converted into labourers, the beasts of burden will be used for field work, and by a most desirable change of labour the immense spaces hitherto uncultivated will be explored, the virgin forests cut down for building ships, and the crowded inhabitants can emerge, and Java, instead of being behind-hand, will become as flourishing and advanced as North America.

This desirable and certain result will not be merely local. It will rapidly encroach upon the neighbouring Residences, and round Samarang and Sourakarta there will be a circle of activity, cultivation, and wealth, which will completely eclipse the rest of Java. What matter the first regrets, the irrational objections, and the old prejudices of the ignorant natives, who are perhaps afraid of steam, like the Africans who broke

the compass, the beginning of navigation. Again, what matters the despair of the lovers of nature, who only look at the tropics with the eyes of Bernardin de Saint-Pierre. It is hardly to be believed, but the opposition to the railway has been nothing on the part of the natives, but very great on that of the Europeans, and it is not at all usual to recommend steam works in Java. We saw in the interior men of great merit, who assured us that railways would be useless; they showed us the shape of the island on a map, that it is lengthened out and narrowed by mountains in the centre; they made us put our fingers on the narrow space which separates the northern spurs from the sea, and showed us still on the map the wonderful network of roads which had been opened by Marshal Daendels. But we had not travelled fifty miles along these roads, crowded with interminable strings of men and animals, without feeling convinced of the necessity of some innovation. And we were still more confirmed in this idea on finding that, notwithstanding the wonderful fertility of the soil, the price of rice, which is the basis of all food, varies considerably within short distances, owing to the insufficient means of communication. For example, it is worth seven or eight rupees (a rupee being worth two shillings) at Batavia, five at Tjandjour, and three, or even two and a half, some forty miles further inland. Then a few years ago, in a time of scarcity, the Javanese were dying of hunger in one Residence, while in another province, 150 miles off, there was abundance.

But this opposition to the railway by those who only looked to the surface difficulties of the expense of viaducts, tunnels, and inclines, was doubled by a prevailing and overpowering fear of *free labour*. It was, in fact, a new opening for the Dutch colony. This railway is the touchstone, and may prove the breaker on which the ship of two hundred years old may be destroyed, and may drag down after her all the economical notions of a former age. The young company, which after so much trouble gained the concession, set the example of free labour. They employ nine thousand workmen, and pay them at the rate of tenpence a day. We gave them our best wishes, feeling sure that by thus boldly taking the initiative, they will open out to the interior all the benefits of civilisation, and even more in moral than material things.

But while still in the midst of overlooking these tables of figures which are before me, I cannot help darting away from my railways, and sacks of coffee and sugar, to tell you something which struck me. These faithful statistics are often very curious, and I do not find men killing savage beasts, but savage beasts killing men. In the year 1863, 273 people were eaten by tigers, 158 by crocodiles, 72 were crushed by rhinoceroses, and 22 died from the bites of serpents. The thunders of heaven too joined in this earthly *battue*, and destroyed 493 human beings.

CHAPTER XX.

THE COLONIAL SYSTEM.

Twenty million natives and twenty-five thousand Dutch — Administrative talent — Statute labour — Forced cultivation of sugar and coffee — Net profits — Javanese princes and European officials — Material prosperity — Blind subjection — Duties of a mother-country in the nineteenth century.

11th December, 1866. — A packet starts to-day for Batavia, of which we take advantage. We should gladly have stayed here longer, not for the sake of Indian curiosities and the charms of the unknown, but for a higher motive. The Resident who has entertained us here, M. Keuchenius, is a most remarkable man, and has made a great impression upon us. We never tired of persuading him to prolong far into the night his learned, agreeable, and fascinating conversation. This rapid journey, with its constant changes, has both pleasures and hardships, and there is real sorrow in the speedy separation from a highly talented man, towards whom we feel in the highest degree both admiration and respect, and whom we shall never meet again excepting in thoughts of the most lively gratitude.

A boat belonging to the royal navy, and fitted with paddles, carried us rapidly away from the quay, where the Resident, General Maleson, and a good many officers,

had come to bid farewell to the Prince. We skirted the side of the pier, where lay crowded together Malay "prahus," with their slender prows, and Arab barques with their stems adorned with carved sandal-wood, and Byzantine kiosks, Chinese supercargoes with stentorian voices superintending the unlading. But soon the shrill sounds became confused in the distance, the land on the horizon diminished to a narrow blue line, with the morning mists hanging over it, and above them the volcanoes raising their lofty dark heads. The further we advanced into the roadstead the more the waves tossed our frail boat, even washing over us in a far from agreeable way. At last we reached the vessel, which was awaiting us with its steam up, and installed ourselves in the smartest, newest, cleanest, and neatest boat I ever saw. This '*Minister Franzen van de Putte*' is Dutch to some purpose. The screw turns, and we are off. Our cabins are furnished like boudoirs, and lighted by large port-holes; the cane sofas, neat dresses, and shining brasses, all recalled the classical national cleanliness. Our crew is Malay, and do their work wonderfully, climbing the rigging like monkeys, and I begin to have a feeling of liking for this agile, patient, kindly race. One characteristic trait of these Indians is their affection for white children. While I was on deck this morning studying the chart, with a sailor crouching at my feet, staring impassibly at my cigar, and ready to hold the burning match to me the moment he saw the light go out, I saw three white babies each waited on by

two little Malay girls ten years of age. Further off there were children six years old with four servants each, to wait upon their hundred thousand fancies, and crouch at their knees from five in the morning till seven at night. In fact they behave as a sultan might to his slaves, and give orders when they richly deserve a whipping. The heat is frightful, and the few European ladies on board take their siesta in their cabins, while three or four Malay girls sit cross-legged at their doors, ready to rush as one man to their assistance if they do but sneeze. For my part I was not long in finding a quiet little corner on deck, and since I am at sea now for six-and-thirty hours, and my own master at last, free to inhale the restorative breeze, with nothing but the open sea round me, I will profit by the opportunity before I meet with any new sights to write you a rapid sketch of the Dutch dominion in the Indian Archipelago as it appears to my mind.

But a traveller's position is often very delicate. If he is received with kindness and cordiality, with a hospitality which fills him with gratitude, his criticisms run a great risk of being considered, if not as an abuse of confidence, at least as an act of ingratitude. Nevertheless there are two distinct elements in a colony—the *men* and the *system*. I am above all things anxious to tell you what kindly feelings and sincere respect I feel for the men in Java. I wish I were fifty years old, that my words might carry weight when I say that there does not exist in the world a body of colonial officials who unite in so great a degree talents, high education,

capacity, and amiability. They are educated in the polytechnic colleges of Delft and Leyden, which are consecrated to the formation of Indian officials, and can speak both French and the Malay and Sunda dialects, as well as their own language. They work ten hours a day, and bring a remarkable intelligence to bear on the widely different matters which come under their despotic administration. In short, these Javanese officials have won my warm admiration.

However much their opinions may differ on the great questions in debate, they serve their country none the less zealously under a fiery sun, in a pestilential climate, and certainly deserve well at their country's hands.

And now, after an almost official journey, where, thanks to the generosity of the Government, the official mechanism so cavilled at has been displayed to us at the same time as the marvellous beauties of nature, ought this embarrassing position, this affectionate respect for individuals, to shut my mouth and prevent my giving my humble opinion on this system so far as I understand it? I think not, and I shall speak with the more frankness that in thus pleading the cause of liberty I am certain to find myself in the road where the colony will find her real prosperity. I shall speak with the more warmth that in Java itself a hopeful liberal revival is taking place, caused by a salutary echo from the mother-country, from which formerly came nothing but authoritative decrees.

In these days of the triumph of brute force, there is

surely much to interest in the sight of a small nation of three million people, the Dutch nation, holding in absolute subjection an immense empire of twenty million inhabitants, beyond the equatorial seas, and by the aid of a comparatively insignificant force. And in the eyes of people who measure the success of an enterprise by its material advantages, it is still more wonderful to see a colony contributing annually to the revenues of the mother-country often *two millions*, and sometimes *four millions* of *net profits*. When one travels through Java with these two ideas in one's head, and finds everywhere perfect tranquillity, incredible prosperity, and even the goodwill of the natives secured by the conquerors, it is impossible not to feel astonishment at first, and then a strong desire to discover the secret of an administration that produces such results.

The whole of Java, four-fifths of Sumatra, three-fourths of Borneo, the greater part of Celebes, the Moluccas, Sumbawa, Lombok, Bali, and Timor—such is the Colonial Empire, containing 28,923 square (geographical) miles, of which the limits were determined by the treaties of 1814 and 1824, and possession secured to the bold Dutchmen, whose European dominion only contains 640 miles. Here the genius of Holland was perseveringly exercised. Here, beginning in 1596, the "Company" established commercial relations, which, as everywhere in India, soon brought in their wake political passions and storms. The "Fort" rose by the side of the "Factory;" the mer-

chant who had turned planter, and the planter who had become a soldier, passed from simple treaties concerning the sale of pepper and coffee to alliances with feeble and friendly sultans, to aid them in dethroning the formidable and hostile Sousouhounans. Finally, after a struggle of two hundred years, of which the only motto was "government by divisions," and which witnessed great prosperity as well as great faults, the Company dissolved, and the Government of the mother-country took firmly in hand its insecure and half ruined work. The wars of the Revolution, the passing of the Dutch sceptre to a French prince, the English occupation from 1811 to 1816, form a series of vicissitudes which checked and even threw back the prosperity and the very life of the colony.

But enough of history for the moment. The past vanishes before the exciting questions of the present. Admiring as I do the energy with which the Dutch system rescued Java from stagnation first, and then from anarchy, I would rather search for the moving spirit of this system, and show you its present results, as well as the causes of the reaction which is beginning to be felt against this boasted and admired code of principles. I would rather tell you of all that we have been able to see in this island, where, in spite of Mahomedan fanaticism, the courage and instinctive habits of a race of pirates, and the pride of an old nobility, twenty-five thousand Europeans rule as demi-gods fourteen million men.

When one has seen, as we have, the sacred respect

and blind submission the Javanese offer to all moral authority, and the rapid putting in practice of all that concerns material order; when the eye has lost itself in the most distant mountains in a horizon of coffee plantations, the labourers on which are the inhabitants of numerous villages; when one has travelled for days together over a country covered with fields of sugar-canes (some containing several square miles), where thousands of forced labourers were at work, each in his furrow; when you know that all this is a Government monopoly: it is easy to understand how, after making good the sum of 1,560,000*l.* for the expenses of administration, 600,000*l.* for the cultivation of coffee, 400,000*l.* for sugar plantations, 300,000*l.* towards public works, 720,000*l.* for the army, 200,000*l.* for the navy, and 640,000*l.* for sundries—in a word, a total of 4,820,000*l.*—the Indian budget during ten years (1852-1862) produced an average excess of receipts amounting to 2,520,000*l.*

The sum is really fabulous, and no other colony can show anything resembling it. The traveller who only makes use of his eyes is dazzled by such magnificent statistical results, by the appearance of the roads, the villages, and fields, the excellence of the cultivation, the activity of a people who can produce so much for their masters. The traveller who reflects asks himself by what means at this present time these millions of men are made to work in the sweat of their brow on ground which they can never possess, and forced to labour daily in fields whose harvests will be for other

men's profits. And yet we are told that these are not slaves.

This has not been the work of a day, but the fruit of a well calculated, if not a just, policy, and of an absolute and despotic authority, against which, however, the Javanese raise no murmur, as it is but a copy of the power of the sultans before the invasion. There is the touchstone, and to my thinking this proves that Java is not a "colony," since there are no colonists, and the position of a planter has no existence for the European any more than for the native, but it is a splendid "mine," minutely regulated by the Government in the smallest details, with the most perfect arrangement for pouring into the State treasury all that can be extracted from this beautiful island—the most fertile country in the world; or rather it is a great "farm," managed by a small number of *officials*, who have rule over thousands of *forced labourers*.

The Dutch Government has attained this complete and well organised dominion, so fruitful of remunerative results, by means of political rather than military skill. The essence and theory of this colonial government seems to be to conceal the European rule, which is never exercised directly, but always through a native intermediate official, over a gentle but proud people, who thus keep up the illusion that they obey only their natural chiefs; to subdue the appearance of it everywhere before the splendour of the Javanese princes, choosing them from among their rivals to appoint them to their posts, thereby obliging them to entire submis-

sion or the loss of their dignity; to keep up their former honours and the popular reverence for them, thus maintaining the respect of the people who obey them as divinities; to pay them highly, sometimes giving them as much as four or eight thousand a year, thus pledging them not to revolt; to give them a special interest in the harvest, thus inducing them to urge on by all possible means the labours of their humble subjects; in a word, to keep up the mask of an authority which the Mussulman priest, whose interest is secured by the tithes, holds up to respect as an idol, and in the name of the native aristocracy to employ a whole people for the benefit of a foreign government.

Java is divided into twenty-two provinces or Residences, containing an average of from six to eight hundred thousand inhabitants. At the head of each is the Resident (a European official), a kind of omnipotent magistrate, who holds in his hands all the reins of government, law, military authority, public works, agricultural monopolies, &c. &c.; in a word, he is *everything*, but he does *nothing* directly. In the same town with him, the Regent, a native official, holds his court in Asiatic splendour. The Dutch officials always treat him with the greatest deference, and live in perfect amity with him, a union the more encouraged *in petto* by the Javanese prince, that a word of blame from the next magistrate might at any moment produce a decree from the Governor-General, declaring that Raden-Adiepatie-Pangheran * * * is replaced in the regency

of * * * by his nephew, Raden-Kousoumo * * *; and as the latter is equally a prince, and of "divine origin," the people will bow with equal servility before their new sovereign. The arbitrary despot venerated by the Javanese is then only a zealous servant of the European chief. Is there a trial at law? The Regent presides over a court of native notabilities, and asks the advice of a Mussulman priest, of the "Adat" and the Koran above all. But the Resident has already expressed his desires, and he knows that the law will be interpreted according to his will.

Is there a road to construct or repair? The Resident carries to the princeling of the Mataram race the plans drawn by the engineers of Leyden, and the native Toumongong or Pangheran sets thousands of forced labourers to work at once, and the road is made. The same rule holds good throughout the whole web of officials, between the Assistant-Resident in the subordinate district and a Regent of the second class, between the controller and the native vedana, between the vedana and the chief of a village. These latter only are elected by the peasants; the reason is easy to understand, and shows the cleverness of the Dutch. The proceeds of the Government property being collected in mass, it is to the chiefs of the villages that the delicate task belongs of apportioning the work between the inhabitants, of seeing the agricultural labours executed according to the orders received, and finally of making an estimate of the value of the produce on which is based the tax in kind. How wise and far-

sighted it is to give these necessary but disagreeable functions to men who possess to a certain extent the confidence of the people, and who are supported by a council of Mantries or headmen. But this explains, too, why this general system is opposed to European colonisation: the Government would be obliged to part with its freely tilled lands, and this it will not consent to for any consideration. Besides, Europeans would hardly submit to such regulations. The very few private plantations which exist in the conquered parts of Java were not established by the Dutch; they have never yielded on this point, but they date from the time of the English, who were generously desirous to found individual estates.

In short, with a smaller staff than the least sub-prefecture requires in France, a province containing perhaps a million of inhabitants is governed by a sign or a look. Add two or three secretaries, an engineer belonging to the survey, an inspector of finances and agriculture, a few clerks (principally natives) to keep the books, and you have the whole staff of a Residency. The European officials are, properly speaking, the motive power; the native subordinates, who act as intermediaries, form the mere machine which transmits the movement; but it is a fact that, as you descend this official scale, you will find functionaries who are better royalists than the king. All depends solely on the Governor-General, who has absolute authority in the Dutch Indies. He is at the head of an army, and of a colonial navy which more than one sovereign state

might envy, and has the appointment of the Residents, and of all the officials of a great empire.

Beside, or rather below the Governor, is a council of five members, called the Council of the Indies, but having no power excepting of advising. Then, under the modest title of directors, come the real ministers in their respective departments. In urgent cases the powers of the head of the colony are unlimited. He may declare peace or war, and on his own responsibility dispose of hundreds of millions. But all permanent decrees must receive the sanction of the home Government, and, be it said by the way, this necessity causes delays most prejudicial to the interests of the colony.

This power is exercised in a fashion both simple and economical. You will doubtless be surprised to learn that an army of 27,000 men, of whom 11,000 are Europeans, 15,000 natives, and 1000 Africans, has a staff of only two generals, two colonels, and at the outside four lieutenant-colonels. In the Indies a captain often takes command of an expedition which at home would be thought of sufficient importance to be confided to a general.

If this government reflects the greatest honour on the encroaching, intelligent, energetic, and practical spirit shown by the Dutch in the Indies, it must be acknowledged that the labour has been lightened by the habits, the customs, and even the prejudices of the conquered people, and that the secret of European domination has consisted above and beyond all in

keeping up in all particulars the state of society which existed formerly.

Invaded first by the Hindoos, and then by the Mahomedans, the people of Java have twice embraced the religion of their conquerors. The result is a calmness and absence of fanaticism which make a nation very easy to rule. They are peaceable agriculturists, greatly attached to the ground, of which they are never possessors, but which supports them, while from time immemorial it has enriched their masters, princes of the race of Bali, warriors from the Himalayas, merchants of Amsterdam, or Dutch colonels. The immense diffusion of noble blood consequent upon polygamy affects in nowise the strange and powerful element of order, formed by the national superstitious respect for the most loved and venerated and in its own circle the most influential aristocracy in the East.

Nothing can be better adapted, if not to colonisation, at least to the working of a colony, than the constitution of property established here from time immemorial. Under the rule of sultans the native prince was the *sole* proprietor of the ground, and had the *sole* right of trading with foreigners. Private property therefore had no existence; but instead of the theoretical possession of everything by the sovereign, the natural course of events had established not collective property, but a collective use of certain lands attached to certain villages, which constituted the "*dessa*," or municipality, and municipal estates. The inhabitants owed to the local prince a fifth of the produce of the ground,

and one day's work in the week, consisting of five days.

On these ancient feudal rights the Dutch rest their claims. Conquest having substituted their authority for that of the sultans, it is natural that they should retain these valuable prerogatives. Perhaps without removing the basis of authority, it might have been possible to make the blessings of Christianity flow over this country, which, cast in an Asiatic mould, has remained unchanged for five hundred years. But no, Asiatic ideas have been continued here, and the Colonial Government says to the natives: "I am the conqueror of monarchs, and not of peoples. I leave to your sovereigns and their priests their honorary dignities; you will remain as serfs to them and to me, and I remain the sole proprietor and sole trader."

It was equal to saying, "Javanese! in these principalities there is but one prince more," and in fact since then Java has resembled a body already drained by two leeches, the native princes and the Mussulman priests, to whom the Dutchmen join as a third. The latter endeavour not merely to provide the hundreds of millions necessary to the maintenance of the civil government, and of the army and navy, but also to obtain for the mother-country some benefit from the colonial resources. The necessary and fatal result has ensued. Since the primitive period of the rule of the Company, and the transitory government of King Louis and of the English, Java has passed through two

periods between 1816 and 1832, the first of semi-prosperity, the second of terrible ruin.

Up to 1824, the triple bleeding practised on a still healthy constitution produced sufficient to satisfy the wants of the three parasites. By raising the land-tax to its maximum, the Government had successively increased it from 640,000*l.* to 1,500,000*l.* and 2,500,000*l.*; then its greatest profits were realised by the exercise of its monopoly of trade in the unconquered but protected lands, such as Preangers, Sourakarta, and Djokjokarta; buying there, as the only and despotic trader, the picol of coffee (132 lbs.) for six shillings, and selling it again in Europe for sixty. When trade was carried on in this fashion with millions of pounds, the treasury was very quickly filled.

But the breaking out of war with these provinces dried up this fertile source, while the expenses of the mother-country consequent on the events in Belgium required a more ample reinforcement. Reduced for their revenue to the tithe upon rice—the principal production of the island, it is true, but a grain that fetches a small price, is weighty to carry, and the profits on which are greatly reduced by the cost of transport to the magazines—the Government was soon hard pressed. The table of statistics on which I found my opinion as to the good or evil effects of the different systems presents, for the period between 1816 and 1824, two years of deficit (averaging 99,000*l.*) and six years when the utmost balance was 304,000*l.*; while from 1824 to 1833, the same table gives *nine*

years of constant deficit, of which the worst was 288,720*l.*; and the total, amounting to 1,800,000*l.*, obliged Holland to contract the so-called Java Loan.

Undermined by this constantly increasing deficit, and an all-devouring debt, drawn different ways by the native princes and the conquerors, exasperated by the discontent of the people, misunderstood by the home Government, worn out and exhausted, the colony appeared in 1830 to be dying of inanition in the hands of those who had so coveted it. There appeared then an impetuous and determined man, with a system prepared which he predicted would extinguish the debt and the deficit, and produce a surplus of forty or fifty millions, in fact which should bring the dying to life. This was General Van den Bosh, a man made for the occasion; but as such, he advised violent measures which are only intended for hours of peril and risk, but which are wrong and dishonest when safety is attained, and ordinary labour only is required to maintain a re-established prosperity; the secret of his famous system of agriculture was simply — *forced labour*.

By means of this system, he contemplated endowing the colony with profitable crops, which should bear a high value in the European market, where alone they could be converted into money. First coffee, then sugar, indigo, cochineal, and tobacco, were not long in producing under his hand un hoped for results. The idea was grand and fruitful; for vast ills there must be great remedies, and no doubt he intended that they

should be applied fairly; but handled by greedy native instruments, this plan has been in reality the cause and the powerful means of constant extortions practised on the Javanese people. This is the sight of which we have just been witnesses, and of which I now sketch the principal points for you.

In all the mountainous parts of the island, each family is *obliged* to cultivate a regular and elaborate plantation of six hundred coffee trees, besides a nursery of reserve trees intended to replace any foot of ground wanting to the inspection of the European controller. And the Government proclaims to all the inhabitants of the hill country—"As your old masters had the sole right of trading, so it is to me *only*, to the Colonial Government, that you will sell the coffee from these plantations regulated by law; I will pay you for it at a price fixed by myself." This price is twenty shillings the picol; the State trader retails this same picol in Holland for fifty-eight shillings. You may suppose, therefore, what immense profits are made by means of this forced labour, when there are now (1866) in Java 296 millions of coffee trees, producing 143,000,000 lbs., bought at 1,169,113*l.*, and sold for 3,386,374*l.*

To the population of the plain country, the officials of the conquering people say—"Wherever we establish a refinery, you will be *obliged* to cultivate sugar-canes, which will be bought by the European revenue officers at the price that we fix."

The State has no manufactories here, only plantations; it contracts with a manufacturer, advancing him

13,888*l.* for twelve years without interest, and leaves to him the whole management and responsibility of the field labour and the works, taking for its own share two-thirds of the sugar fabricated at a minimum price fixed by itself, and leaving to the manufacturer a third of the harvest, which he may dispose of as he pleases, to cover the chances and expenses of his undertaking. Under such conditions, the work must be carried on on a large scale to make any profit. The manufacturer pays to the peasants who are obliged to labour for him fivepence the picol of refined sugar; he must sell two-thirds to the Government at the rate (formerly of 13*s.* 10*d.*) now of 10*s.* 3*d.*, and the Government retails this same picol in Holland for 61*s.* You see, again, with what rude simplicity the State enriches itself by this second monopoly, when 201,506 native families are set to work in the sugar-cane fields extending over 253,047 acres, distributed round 97 manufactories, where 304,000,000 lbs. of sugar are refined, worth 7,000,000*l.*

Such is the spirit of General Van den Bosh's agricultural plans, which have filled to overflowing the formerly empty treasury of the mother-country; the promises of the general-farmer, who enrolled the whole population of Java into an army of planters, have been more than fulfilled. Since 1833, when his energetic measures first bore fruit, the debt has been rapidly extinguished, the annual expenses of the colony have been entirely covered, and a *constant* net profit, which in some years has been as high as 3,782,320*l.*, has in

thirty-three years amounted to a total of 72,000,000*l.*, making an average of 2,181,800*l.* per annum. Thus, thanks to the most perfect regulations for concentrating from all sides the powerful forces intended to lend their weight to the screw of this immense official money-press, 14,000,000 worthy simple Javanese have been put under the vice, in the name of their princes and of their Prophet, and millions of picols of coffee and sugar have been made to flow into the reservoirs of the State.

But there is a reverse side to this brilliant picture of commercial prosperity; hidden behind it there is first the civil law of forced labour, "*des corvées, encore des corvées, toujours des corvées,*" then the ruling idea of a disguised slavery which is more productive of moral degradation to the master than even to the slave; finally, under a specious appearance of justice, there is a door left wide open to breaches of the law, and the abuses which proceed from them.

First comes the principle that throughout the whole official scale, from the Resident and the Mussulman priest to the "*mantrie,*" all, whether Europeans or natives, are equally interested in the harvest; the authorities take one fifty "*doits,*"¹ another twenty-four "*doits*"² on each picol. A less submissive people than the Javanese would long ago have rebelled against such a custom. If it be true that the abuse of the system should be attributed not to its author's original

¹ 8*l.*² 4*l.*

idea, but rather to the greed of the native chiefs, who, being put in a position to gratify their avarice, press for their tithes, and never think that the ground can produce enough, some blame must also be given to the system of proportional prizes granted by the Government, which authorises and stimulates this state of things, from which in fact it profits so largely.

Again, what is done in the case of factories, where a large extent of ground is required within a certain radius to keep supplied such important works? Blocks of five or six *dessas* (or villages) are swept of their inhabitants for the needs of the plantation; and thus not only are the natives condemned to forced labour, but they are torn from their homes, and even sometimes transported in a body to great distances to till for the profit of the Government hitherto uncultivated ground.

If in Java the arrangements of the system of agriculture have turned the lands of the colony into an official farm where no one tree is higher than another, and no furrow uneven, in Holland the system has become the battle field of the most excited controversy between Liberals and Conservatives.

Judging the system from its material results, the Conservatives hold it as an article of faith, and refuse to modify it, treating as dreamers and fools the Liberals who condemn it as immoral and unjust. But, setting aside the lofty questions of right and justice, which speak loudly enough for themselves, and looking only

at the financial results, the system already seems to me to offer some field for criticism. It may be true that it has replenished the State coffers, but who shall say that free labour would not effect as much or more? How is it, for instance, that of the five branches of forced labour organised in the first instance, two only, sugar and coffee, have remained in the same state? Because it has been found necessary to give up the others, which under the system of forced labour brought ruin to the State and the peasant. But has the colony lost what the State abandoned? On the contrary, these branches of cultivation have increased and greatly prospered. And for a very simple reason. Being no longer obliged to cultivate indigo, tea, and tobacco in appointed places, and having besides the prospect of being to a certain extent masters of their harvest, the peasants have been able to choose the most suitable soil, and to produce at a remunerative price. And, further, in 1857, twenty-seven years after the adoption of the agricultural system in the rest of the island, Preangers was not included in the regulation of forced labour; nevertheless, the produce of coffee had increased, according to the table of statistics, from 30,000 to 243,554 picols. Such an example of the effect of even relative liberty is patent to all eyes. Who would dare say that it would be otherwise in the great workings of sugar and coffee?

The monetary question here touches the moral law; and the Conservatives who have conversed largely with us in Java have ventured in defence of their system to

invoke this law, and to rest their cause upon it; they have told us what we all know: that the Oriental races differ more widely from the European than do the climates of the Equator and the Pole. In Java the fine climate enables man to live without house or clothes; the native, within reach of whose hand a prodigal nature has put more than sufficient food, is thus providentially freed from the hard law which condemns the European to labour for his livelihood. With no wants of his own, and disinclined to submit to any artificially imposed upon him, the Javanese is naturally indolent and lazy; he can live in the Italian *dolce far niente*, and at the same time in the *contentus suâ sorte* of the grammar. Therefore, such is the strange reasoning of Conservatives, he must be made to work; and they add that under this law of forced labour, which obliges him to gain 20s. per picol of coffee, and 6s. per picol of sugar, he is better off than he would have been if left to his natural indolence.

The Liberals—who are unhappily few—reply that this specious reasoning is in reality worthless, and that it is inspired by a cupidity which is even blind to its own interests. Besides, were it based on fact, it could not invalidate the principles of justice and humanity, in defiance of which an entire nation is made to labour not merely for the benefit of the Colonial Government—which would be less unjust—but for the benefit of the far distant home Government. In their eyes a colony should be something more than a great

storehouse, from which is exported 5,320,000*l.*, against an import of only 2,760,000*l.* of merchandise, the laws of forced labour being offered for payment of the rest. "When we discuss the systems in force in Java," they say in the Assembly,¹ "the real question is only one of *money*. It is money alone which we have before our eyes. Is it from fear of not being able to civilise the Javanese . . . that we keep them under the yoke of forced labour? I declare that I have never yet heard this argument put forth, while on the other hand I have too often heard it said—'If you do away with forced labour, you would lose your money.'"

In Java, too, we have seen Liberals, and those most noble ones, hesitate painfully, and answer almost with tears in their eyes when we asked them how many thousands their Residence contributed annually to the State. They think that the mother-country has duties to fulfil towards a naturally well-disposed and faithful people; they wish that the Government should not be the proprietor of everything; that a European might be something besides an official; that there should be men who were not kings in their small spheres, giving orders to a whole population to plant rice here, indigo there, further on vanilla—to give always a fifth part to the State, and to labour one day at coffee, another at sugar, for the good of the Dutch treasury.

There are, however, some colonists in Java, though very few. By a melancholy contrast, they are all

¹ Sitting of the 29th November, 1861—speech of Dr. Van Hoëwell.

collected in the two imperial provinces of Djokjokarta and Sourakarta, which have been conquered by Dutch arms, but are respected for political reasons. For in the eyes of the Malays it is of great service to the Colonial Government to appear to venerate Sousounhounan and the divine descendants of the Kings of Mataram, those phantom sovereigns, gilt idols, poor puppets, in a show of which the Dutch hold the strings. Though held in durance by a diplomatic Resident, the Imperial Government is more liberal to strangers than that of the Hague; it lets land on twenty years' leases at a reasonable rate to colonists who come here to make their fortunes.

Nothing similar exists in the entirely Dutch possessions, and the European merchants, mere dwarfs beside their great rival, the State, can only export the surplus of the Maatshappij, the remaining sugar from the third by which the Government farmer must repay himself, and the produce of the Sultan's dominions, which will some day be joined together by the railroad constructed at last by free labour, and hence considered in Java as a phenomenon.

Besides the enormous agricultural returns that I have shown you, I might speak of the other sources of revenue: 85,000 picols from the tin mines; 320,000*l.* from the customs; 800,000*l.* from the land-tax, the famous fifth, always kept up, and levied over 15,237,125 acres of land under cultivation, of which 10,961,350 consist of rice plantations producing 36,758,400 lbs. of rice; a considerable capitulation-tax on the Chinese,

whose invasion it is desired to check; the farming out of the sale of opium, which produces about 16,000*l.* in each Residence; and tributes in kind of cattle and horses for the Regents, whose luxury is proverbial.

But it is a melancholy fact that no particle of these accumulated revenues has been appropriated to the moral improvement of these people. At my first entrance into this fairy-like land, I was enthusiastic over its beauties. I knew not which to admire most, the native splendours of this promised land, or the use it has been put to by man. The excellence of the cultivation, from the rice plantations forming amphitheatres in the valleys, to the coffee trees which approach the lofty summits of the volcanoes; the bustle of an active population, all, even the instinctive light-heartedness of an indigenous race born in slavery and having no hatred for it, all would have given me the idea of an earthly paradise if the respect shown to white men had not by its abject servility recalled to mind the ignoble dependance of the conquered race. It went to my heart never to see a man stand up before me, but thousands of creatures crouching down in a row, with a humility and an indifference which have been grafted upon a race that was formerly proud, and is still intelligent and industrious.

Later, when our travels led us before the ruins of ancient temples, those wonders called Mendoet, Boro-Boudor, and Tjandji-Seou, I was struck by the enormous population announced by these gigantic erections. There can be no doubt that in the eighth century

Java was more thickly peopled than in the present day. In these buildings, the grandeur of the proportions, the purity of the design, the dignity of the architecture, the beauty of the statues, the arrangement and finish of the smallest bas-reliefs, prove that at that period labour and all the arts of civilisation had attained an extraordinary development. Now, when from the summit of these temples one looks around, what is there to be seen? A fertile country, but a people fallen back into a state of infancy in all that relates to anything but sugar and coffee. Art is completely dead; as for manufactories, the fabrication and tempering of their boasted kriss, and the weaving and dying of sarrongs, are in no degree better than the works of savage tribes.

Thus the result of three centuries of European occupation, or at least of European influence, seems to have been to lower—and to lower greatly—the Javanese people in the scale of civilisation. If you consider that this gentle intelligent people who possess both good feeling and an appreciation of moral beauty are numbered by thousands, does not this leave a terrible responsibility upon their masters?

Finally, as the traveller proceeds in his daily journeys, turning away his eyes in pity from a quasi slave people, and eagerly enjoying the purer sights and charms of this idyllic flowery paradise, he vaguely feels that something is wanting: the want defines itself; he looks around to see if beyond the desolate and ruined Boro-Boudor there is a steeple, a dome, a cupola, a

temple, in fact, of any kind, to show that there is a thought of God in this country which He has so richly endowed. But this satisfaction is refused him. Rarely seen in the large towns, places of worship are entirely wanting in the country.

The Government contents itself with forty-seven schools, where the trifling number of less than 2000 native children are educated in a country containing 14,000,000 souls, and strictly prohibits any society for the propagation of religion by missionaries; vigorously repulsing any attempt at education, or any school which might raise the standard of intelligence amongst the natives. In the interior of the island, therefore, there are very, very few schools, and no churches. Does the State desire then to establish its dominion more securely upon the ignorance of its subjects, and deliberately to hide the light under a bushel? Is it because it feels that on the day when Christianity shall have delivered the Javanese from the despotism of the Mussulman priest, and education has raised him above the enervated Regent in his harem, there will no longer be such lucrative means of extortion from an enlightened people, and, with the sources of revenue, will be lost the agents of forced labour whose disgraceful part ought never to have been dictated to them by European colonists? It seems rather that the principal, if not the sole, aim of the colonial system is to draw as much as possible from the colonies. Since the days when, to keep up the prices, the spice trees were destroyed by fire and sword, and

thousands of pounds' worth of precious stores destroyed, some progress has certainly been made; but the administration still remains a picture, though a feeble one, it is true, of that commercial vandalism, and it is evident that there are errors as there are abuses inseparable from monopolies.

But it must be hoped that a change will happen before long, and that, without any violent commotion, this feudal system, which clips so many wings and stifles so many aspirations, may give place to the modern ideas of development, progress, and life. And how easy this would be with a staff which, devoted with their whole hearts to this country, yet endure rather than like the heavy rule which they themselves have over the Javanese, and who would guide them with such noble zeal from this intellectual and moral night to the wide domain of liberty, civilisation, and Christianity!

I should like to see in the beautiful fields of Java these strong men working for themselves and their families, not for the treasury of the home Government; enriching themselves if they are industrious; rising above the common level if they are intelligent; and gathering for themselves, since they have sowed. I would passionately desire for Java that the State should cease to be farmer or trader; to protect a degraded religion and pay its greedy ministers; to set aside from habit or fear a pure, disinterested, and ennobling faith; to keep up the arbitrary power of an aristocracy which has sold itself to, and is made

use of by, the Government; and to have policemen instead of colonists; that it should cease to allow nothing to European enterprise; to depend upon excessive personal payment for filling the treasury at the Hague; to govern a colony in the nineteenth century altogether in Asiatic fashion; and to be from the rising to the setting of the sun nothing but a new, greedy, and many-headed sultan, over an industrious nation capable of freedom, but kept in servitude by ignorance. It should only invade this country to spread the benefits of Christianity, and of material and moral progress, and not to repeat the old saying—*Sic vos non vobis!*

May a new era then open here to European colonists and native labourers; may the one with steam-engines and railroads, opening up the interior perhaps better than any timid theories, the others with their strong arms and love of the soil, strive together to extract from this beautiful and bountiful earth the treasures which shall enrich both, if liberty and not forced labour preside over their works. We have already seen men filled with a sacred zeal for justice and duty, claiming for the conquered and hard-worked race their share of the benefits of our time; let them know with what feelings the traveller's heart has throbbed when they spoke of their view of the rights and duties of a mother-country; perhaps the *Sursum corda* which he addresses to them from the bottom of his heart may be to them some comfort and refreshment in the heat of the struggle which they have undertaken.

CHAPTER XXI.

RECOLLECTIONS AND STORIES.

The hero of Borneo — The arsenal at Onrust — One Chinese the less
— A rhinoceros at the club — Midnight entertainment at the palace
of the Residents at Batavia.

13th December, 1866—Return to Batavia.—We arrived here last night, having successively touched at the ports of Pekalongan, Tagal, and Cheribon; the charm of this coasting voyage consisted in showing us the general effect of the island we had just travelled through. One by one we recognised the hills which we had climbed, the volcanoes we had skirted, and the rivers we had crossed in pirogues; the rosy hues of sunrise, the blue mists of midday, and the crimson shades of evening alternated on the crests and valleys of this earthly paradise, which we had been in for a month, and so often returned to in our thoughts. Doubling Cape Krawang for the second time, I thought over the most striking things I had seen since I first perceived it from the deck of the 'Hero,' and certainly the rhinoceros hunts, the bayadères, and the sultans' receptions, already seemed like dreams.

The moment we dropped anchor in the roads, we were greeted by the 'Boyor,' a boat kindly sent on

purpose for the Prince by the Resident, and as night fell, we returned to the town, which I had so much admired the first time I saw it. It still makes the same impression upon me. The white colonnades rising as though in a sacred wood, the open doors leading into the gardens of a southern Babylon, the canals which reflect the trembling light of the full moon, the animated crowds moving incessantly beneath the avenues of palms, all enchant me as much as ever. Even before going to fetch our letters from Europe, we went straight from the quay to M. Van Delden, to thank him heartily for our wonderful journey which has been entirely his doing. To his plans, and the letters he wrote beforehand to those who received us, do we owe all the ease, the kindness, and the charm of our rapid tour.

I rather feel now as if I were a colonial swell, for I speak Javanese, of which I am very proud. When I ask for water or ice, the red-robed servants no longer bring me a hot foot-bath or a boot-jack. The constant walk up and down my room, and the marble bath, still afford me the same delights; and dressed in a cabaya and Moorish trousers, I enjoy the spices and curry which are so wholesome in the tropics.

Then the Prince saw his Excellency the Governor for the time being, the General in command, Admiral Fabius, and the civil functionaries, who all live in palaces where the trophies and surroundings of their Indian life were the subjects of deeply interesting conversations.

Our little ponies galloped up the long avenues which lead to the slope of the citadel, and we alighted at the house which was painted and ornamented by Raden-Saleh, the artist who passed many years in European courts, heaping adventure on adventure. Was it not for him that an English young lady poisoned herself? Did he not serve as a type for Eugène Sue in '*Les Mystères de Paris*'? He was his own architect, and has coloured his house a pale pink; it is shaded with tamarind and tulip trees, and looks into the enclosures of the botanical gardens, where black panthers and royal tigers are sporting: he uses them as models for his pictures, in which he succeeds in representing the most brilliant effects of tropical nature. He spoke French a little, and German very well. "Ah," he said to us in that language, "I think of nothing but Europe; one is so dazzled there that there is no time to think of death." It was a singular contrast to hear this man of colour, in a green vest and red turban, with a kriss at his side, and a palette in his hand, speaking, in Göthe's tongue, of French art, English beauties, and the curious recollections of European life.

But what we especially enjoyed was an evening we spent with M. Van Delden, who had collected together some of the most agreeable specimens of the Indian army and navy. Colonel Verspick was amongst these fine soldier-like men with their bronzed faces. But his name is not needed—if either in Holland or Java you mention the "hero of Borneo," every one would

know that it is him you mean. His manners and conversation are as simple and soldier-like as his appearance is dignified; he has been greatly weakened by pestilential fevers, and at first sight seems to be dreamy, but the moment he begins to relate anything, he becomes excited and eager. It is a long time since he first landed in Java, when, thanks to the petticoats which both men and women wear alike, he pursued the women thinking they were men, and he has now returned from the last war in Borneo, and, without any very great loss, has brought back the troops triumphant. While listening to him, I seemed to feel all the excitement of victory.

The enemy, 1500 strong, led them a dance across the swamps and jungles of the wildest part of the island. Verspick had but 240 soldiers and 400 coolies; he resolved to risk all, but determined to aim a decisive blow. He knew that the enemy was concentrated in a strong position, at which it seemed impossible to arrive without marching along a torrent through defiles where defeat and certain death awaited him; an impenetrable and mountainous forest, some seventy miles in width, extended between the white men and the "Scalp Hunters." Yet, for twenty-four days and twenty-four nights, the courageous band laboured unceasingly beneath a heavy rain, and cut a road through the thicket with axes; reduced to a few handfuls of rice for each man, and living on quinine, they arrived at the enemies' camp without having lighted a fire, which might have betrayed them, and without uttering

a word of complaint. They fell suddenly upon them, like a serpent creeping silently through the forest, and, after a battle that lasted thirteen hours, the victory was complete. The blood of white men so treacherously killed on this same river was revenged, Dutch dominion assured, and the "Scalp Hunters" stopped in their fearful massacres. Verspick then put all his small army, with 400 prisoners, hostages, and trophies, on eighteen bamboo rafts, which, flying down the falls of the watercourse, accomplished the 300 miles of these deep gorges in twenty-four hours. The pirate scouts, who had waited in vain on the steep sides of the rocks, fled terrified at seeing their chiefs in chains crowded together by the sides of the victorious soldiers in this bamboo fleet which bounded about on the waters.

When night fell, the Colonel wished to stop, but it was impossible; the current broke the first moorings which they tried to throw out; but by some inconceivable good fortune, this bold party of men, sometimes thrown against trunks of trees, sometimes drifting between rocks, made their way safely between these wild shores during the darkness of the night, where the roaring of the tigers might be heard. By sunrise they were on the sea, and were picked up on the bar by the Dutch fleet which was watching the entrance to the river. This boldness and fiery enthusiasm, which tempt him to undertake the wildest enterprises, that up to this time fortune has crowned with the most unhopd for success, have made Colonel Verspick not

only a brave officer, who is raised far above even envy, but the hero of these intertropical expeditions. Certainly one of the greatest enjoyments of a long voyage is that it enables one to make the acquaintance of illustrious men who are almost unknown in Europe, and to listen to these glorious recollections, joined to those of the strange campaigns of Macassar, Sumatra, and Timor, which all here recollect, and which leave in the air an indescribable and exciting smell of powder and heroism.

14th December, 1866.—The event of the day has been the arrival of a Russian frigate, the 'Variag,' from the Amour river. The sailors, who are enormously tall, and wear moustaches and greenish black dresses, excited great astonishment amongst the Malay population. Since the morning there have been about 300 of them lying dead drunk along the quay, occasionally being smartly touched up by the knouts of the furious quartermasters.

At six o'clock the 'Boyor' had got up her steam, and carried us eight miles out into the roads to the naval establishment at Onrust; this little island is a coral reef, which has been made as healthy as possible by erecting a barrier to the sea on the north-west. Formerly it was a centre of infection, owing to the exhalations from the madrepores growing in unoccupied corners; now there is not a corner of which the hand of man has not made some use, and the workmen and their families make a population of 1200 souls.

We were shown over it by the Admiral's aide-de-camp, M. de Holmberg, Captain Van Benneken, the manager of Onrust, and a dozen naval officers, all very distinguished-looking men, and speaking remarkably good French. The Prince was in uniform, which, after making many a cruise, had been lying by for ten months; he was delighted to find himself among men of his own profession who were so cordial and agreeable. The older men, especially the Admiral, called to mind, with a spirit that was quite French, a thousand incidents of the time when they had sailed in the same seas with the Prince de Joinville; and the hours passed quickly by.

The chief arsenal of the colonial navy is at Sourabaya; Onrust is only a secondary position; but we saw several well appointed workshops where masts were being made by machines of sheet-iron weighing 56 tons; docks where brigs, cutters, and launches were being built, and a floating-dock, 70 yards long, of most beautiful teak wood, and perfectly water-tight. In it was a three-masted vessel which had not got off so well as our 'Hero' on the rocks of Claremont. Caught in a typhoon, they touched upon some coral reefs near here, where they stuck like a green apple on a hedgehog's back; the only way to get them off was by breaking off great pieces of the madrepores, which pierced the sides, and which luckily were so firmly fixed in that they hermetically sealed the holes they had made.

We performed a variety of evolutions in the 'Boyor,' being saluted on all sides; and we successively visited

three corvettes, the 'Ardjoenoer,' which was getting up her steam, preparing to start for Singapore, where she will wait for the new Governor-General; the 'Zoutman,' sixteen guns, which was leaving the dock and going to Europe; and the magnificent 'Metalen Kruis,' commanded by Colonel Palm, a "naval colonel." This Dutch title of "naval colonel" astonished us very much. The corvette is 200 feet long, and of 250 horse-power, carrying a crew of 220 men, and provisions for eighteen months. We examined every corner of these beautiful ships, which are rather low in the water, and armed with 32-pounders and rifled carronades. It is impossible to describe the neatness and order of everything, the healthy appearance of all, and especially the scrupulous Dutch cleanliness which we even admired amongst the rubbish in the hold.

Exhausted by a burning sun, we finished our day's work in the Commandant's large drawing-room, where some refreshments redoubled our enjoyment and good humour; we could almost imagine ourselves in a ship's saloon, there were so many naval stories. Here is one of the good old times, which has, I think, rather a colonial stamp on it. In the roads of Batavia was a French frigate, whose officers, after a hard campaign, were delighted to come and enjoy themselves on land. One night the cadets and lieutenants were enjoying themselves in a public garden in the town; after drinking for some time, they became rather excited. A Chinese, belonging to the establishment, made some

impertinent remarks, and a cadet, seizing a chair, broke it over the head of the Chinese, and broke the head at the same time. The "Celestial" fell stone dead. This rather threw a shadow over the entertainment; they came back considerably dashed in spirits to the launch and the frigate, fearing some alarming demand for reparation on the part of the Dutch Government, perhaps being degraded, and, in fact, that it would be made a state affair. At sunrise the commander ordered a boat to be manned, and set out with the involuntary criminal for the Governor's palace; he went up with real sadness and official consternation to the arbitrary sovereign of the Indies, and detailed to him, with melancholy compunction, the event of the day before. "Good Heavens! my dear sir," replied the Governor, in the gentlest and most cheerful tones, "pray do not trouble yourself. One Chinaman more or less!—what does it matter to me? There are four millions in the Celestial Empire to replace him." And as our officers continued their regrets, the Governor almost apologised to them for the Chinaman whom they had killed. You can imagine how cheerfully the boat returned to the frigate.

But it was not only the cadets who made a commotion in the capital of the Dutch colonies. Not far from our hotel is a beautiful garden surrounding the "Club of Harmony," which is the Jockey Club of these parts. Nothing can be finer than the marble columns, the Italian balconies, and the great mirrors, in which the white colonnades are seen in endless per-

spective. One of our companions in the trip to Onrust, M. Cézard (of the great commercial house at Nantes), had the good luck to get a rhinoceros taken from its mother, when only two days old, by the natives, and he has tamed it; this animal was one of the great attractions in an enclosed part of the garden; but one fine day, when it was grown to its full size, it upset the palings, and charged straight at the mirrors of the club, where it attempted to crush its reflection, and galloped wildly about the reading and dining rooms, which are on the ground floor. There was many hundred pounds' worth of damage, and terrible fear must have reigned amongst the fifty odd portraits of the Governors-General of the Indies since 1601 to the present day.

We came back from Onrust with a strong gale from the west, and saluted on our way six towers placed on the neighbouring coral isles to defend the roads, and the 'Prince Alexander,' a worm-eaten old frigate, which displays the rounded shapes of former days. Light pirogues darted about like flying fish on the waves, which every moment seemed as though they would engulf them. While on land, we saw a sacred gun which the Indians look upon with great reverence, saying that it was washed up by some extraordinary tide to its present position, which is about two miles from the shores. The breach, which is of bronze, represents a hand with the thumb between the first and second fingers; it is surrounded with groups of Malays, and incense and baskets blazing

with flowers and fruit are offered to it, and the heads of fighting cocks are cut off before it. They explained to us that the Malay women come and settle accounts with the tutelary deity of this gun, and pray for children. May the gun-god grant their requests.

15th December, 1866.—On our last day in Batavia, the Resident, M. Hoozeveldt, collected all the chief people in the town, and gave us a great dinner, with covers laid for ninety. It was as good and refined a dinner as the greatest gourmand could desire. The brilliant uniforms of the guests, the hundreds of Indian attendants in red turbans and gold-embroidered dresses, the baskets of crimson fruit shaded by light palm leaves, which were arranged in clusters, and the lights reflected in all the glass, gave an air of enchantment to this scene of combined European and Oriental luxury. At the end of dinner, the “*opas*,” or native police, who carry swords slung over the shoulder, and a great plate of copper on their chests, threw open the door into the garden, and stood grandly at the head of a crowd of 6000 spectators, dressed from the waist to the feet in pink and green, and scarlet and blue. At a given signal they all crouched on the ground. They invaded the garden like a many-coloured wave, hurled violently against a bank, and falling back again in silence. We went out into the verandah, and the “*wagang goleg*,” which are Javanese marionnettes began to play. The dolls are two feet high, cut out of iron-wood, so that they can be knocked up against one

another with great violence; the whole set costs some 600 rupees (50%). They were kind enough to explain to me the sacred tragedy of the Indian Guignol. It is the mythological history of Java, with the most extraordinary jumble of an angel Gabriel who falls in love with the mother of Alexander the Great, and dies at some feast; but his soul, passing into the body of a crocodile who eats up a young girl, transmigrates into the head of a serpent, which is killed by a woman: the final result is Buddha, and two ibexes, the objects of the deepest adoration. It is a jumble of ideas only to be equalled by the infernal concert of tom-toms, cymbals, and big drums. Then an old man with a white beard appeared, and all the population prostrated themselves before him; he was the Mussulman priest who solemnly pronounced his blessing on the natives. The choristers brought him great numbers of "kedebous," a sort of top nearly two feet high, and raised on sharp iron points; round the upper part, which is a great ball of iron-wood, hung bits of chain, whose weight was intended to increase the giratory movement. The priest murmured some mysterious prayers over these points, and then a band of young fanatics threw themselves at his feet; each one took a "kedebous," and, placing the point on his chest or shoulder, communicated a rapid movement to it with both hands; one rather expected to see the iron point enter their flesh like a drill; some of them wildly contorted themselves, and, throwing their heads back, the heavy top turned like a teetotum on their muscular throats. By

what effort of skill, or marvellous resistance to pain, nearly fifty of these fanatics were able to reappear before us unwounded, I do not know. Only one, who perhaps had not sufficient superstition to take away the fear of danger, received a deep hole in the chest from the "kedebous," which, turning rapidly, went in like a corkscrew, and the blood flowed copiously. With stoical calmness, and without showing a sign of pain, the fanatic went straight up to the priest, who stuffed a bit of tow into the wound, and made all complete by spitting on it.

Then the conjuror-priest called some children of about ten or twelve years old, who crawled up to his feet; he took a box of steel needles about twenty inches long, and thrust one into each child's face. The needle penetrated the flesh in the middle of one cheek, and came out in the middle of the other; then he opened their mouths to show that it crossed them like a bit between the tongue and the palate. Thus spitted through, they came in a row to show themselves to us; the operator then drew out the steel with a sharp pull, licked over the holes with his tongue, and the children, looking perfectly happy, showed no trace of this piercing. But I can tell you that the sight curdled my blood. The last act of this burlesque of fanatics was acted by "tjagogs," or Chinese singers with their faces thickly painted with yellow; and it all finished like Punch or a fight. Naked wrestlers beat one another about with sticks and clubs, to the great delight of the enchanted

populace, who rallied the vanquished. The combatants gave such terrible blows, owing to their great muscular strength, and so excited themselves with wild shrieks, that the police were sometimes obliged to interfere to prevent their being killed. All this time an intoxicated orchestra beat bamboo drums with all their strength, and the enthusiastic crowd wandered about beneath the feathery branches of the lighted up bananas and tulip trees; Bengal fires illuminated the luxuriant clusters of the avenues at intervals. It is one o'clock in the morning, and in five hours we shall have bade farewell to Java.

CHAPTER XXII.

SINGAPORE.

The meeting-place of the mails from the East and West — Motley population of Klings and Bengalese, Persians and Chinese — A woman from Malabar — The garden of Wam-Poa — Opium-eaters — Creation and progress of the commercial and military settlement.

Singapore, 20th December, 1866.—We are 240 leagues from Batavia, but we have not yet forgotten the touching farewells which we had to take on the quay four days ago. Notwithstanding the early hour, all came to see us off, every one who had received the Prince so well, and overpowered us with kindness during our stay: the Resident, Colonel Verspick, Lieutenant de Holmberg, M. Cézard, and many others; but it was especially our good friend, M. Van Delden, under whose roof we had been treated as part of the family, and whose very name is a pleasure to hear, after being our firman from the day we entered Java, from whom it was hardest to part.

We had rather a bad passage; our 'Minister Franzen van de Putte' is more charming in good than in bad weather; the gales kept us back terribly. Often we did not make more than two miles an hour, struggling against the winds from Cochin China, which stirred up a dirty chopping sea; our nutshell of a boat got

dreadfully knocked about, and carried along by strong currents, which wound in and out of the numerous coral reefs; the blows of the waves broke everything on board.

We have again crossed the Line, but our return to the northern hemisphere was greeted by the most disagreeable heavy sea. Still very often the horizon was bounded like that of a lake, and our route marked out by hundreds of little green islands dotted about. The 'Nautical Directory' strongly recommends any one not to land, and carefully classes the different shores, dividing them into those where you will be merely killed, and those where you will also be eaten. I must confess I feel the difference to be insignificant, and the similarity of the two operations equally uncomfortable to the patient.

We passed the Straits of Banca, sometimes seeing the low swampy shores of Sumatra, sometimes the volcanic heights of Borneo. We anchored twice—at Mintoek and at Rhio—in wild little creeks, where the most brilliant vegetation is washed by the sea. The islanders were more armed than clothed, and their skin, darker than that of the Javanese, added a touch of ferocity to their warlike appearance. We thought it prudent to stay but a short time on land, as even the mildest-looking of them seemed always watching for prey with treacherous eyes, and teeth that looked as though accustomed to eat human flesh.

While speaking of this race of pirates, I must tell you that we have a young Dutch poet on board; he

is half an albino, with long floating curls, a face like a ghost, and a voice of thunder. Every night, after his absinthe, he put on a tragic air, and, wandering about the deck, recited prophecies in alexandrines, with exclamations and declamations which rose above the roaring of the waves. On the other hand, these waves alarmed a poor French lady who was travelling alone with her cat, who, with a combined outpouring of heart and stomach, asked us if it were true that we were not going to the bottom; and, as though about to make her last will, she told us all her financial and romantic troubles in disjointed sentences intermingled with prayers and spasms of sea-sickness.

At last, this morning, we doubled Pan Reef, where, eighteen months ago, the steamer 'Hydaspe' sank in broad daylight, and let down our anchor in the roads of Singapore. It was the first time for eight months that we had seen vessels carrying the tricolor flag. We were accosted by some hundred "sam-pangs," manned with Malays, Africans, or Arabs, clothed with a langoutis, but wearing rings on their fingers and toes, who took us on shore. Immediately on landing we saw some thoroughbred horses, a cricket-ground, where gentlemen were playing, and a church steeple; and these three signs told us that it was a miniature England.

5th January, 1867, Singapore.—For a fortnight we have been stationary in this tiny island, which is only a few miles from the Line. After the continuous

activity in Australia and Java, I feel inclined to apply to myself the old German proverb, "*Raste ich, roste ich*," — "When I rest I rust." Quite upset and astonished by this forcible rest, we wait with impatience some opportunity of going to the wonderful kingdom of Siam. At first we thought of taking some sailing vessel, and had even entered into negotiations for a French brig that was for sale; but the north-east monsoon is at its height, and it would take some twenty days against wind and tide to make this rather dangerous voyage. Every day we are promised a certain capacious steamer belonging to a Chinese owner, sailing under the Siamese flag, with an English adventurer for its captain. It is impossible to say when it will come, or when we shall be let out of this hot prison.

Singapore is the watch-tower between the Indian and China Seas; all sailing vessels and steamers, which crowd along this thoroughfare between Europe and the extreme East, touch here, and make it very lively. In one day several hundred passengers landed from three steamers, and invaded the Hôtel de l'Europe.

Some came from Paris and London by Egypt; amongst these were six officers and twelve non-commissioned officers of our army coming to raise and instruct the Javanese regiments. All the others who come from the West have still got the European look. Fresh from the Boulevards and the City, and put into the Royal Mail's express from Paris to China like letters dropped into a box, these well-mannered

travellers still wear their handsome and inconvenient garments, irreproachable neckties, and stiff European collars. Others, coming from Yokohama, Hong Kong, and Saïgon, have acquired a thoroughly colonial appearance, with great bell-shaped hats made of the bark of aloes, and flowing garments of China crape. Amongst them was a party of twenty Javanese who were being sent at government expense to French and English colleges. The only part of our customs that they have adopted is the black overcoat, which hides the long swords, and makes them very awkward at first.

But there is something very curious in this meeting of the great missions from the East and West, both having the same end in view, and greeting each other midway.

The Spanish mails from Manilla are not wanting in this general meeting-place, and various thin "hidalgos" land, after a journey of twelve days, in varnished boots and spurs, reflecting the rays of the sun in the quantities of gold embroidery on their uniforms. The table d'hôte was served in a long gallery, where the meeting of so many different elements presented the most animated appearance, and gave rise to the most polyglot conversation; Chinese servants dressed in white, and almost naked yellow-skinned Malays, carried the plates round the tables, where the different nationalities of the guests made a motley variety. Every one spoke at the same time, of every town on the earth, from the Amoor River to Cape Oomooroo-

moon, the two extremes of geography and ordinary language; nothing could be more amusing, livelier, or more interesting than this cosmopolitan assemblage.

While the quay is covered with quite as many varieties of people, and presents a miniature but exact picture of the roads, where the flags of every nation float, where there were yesterday 96 big ships, and to-day there are 110, the town itself of Singapore is a perfect tower of Babel. It contains 14,000 Malays, 60,000 Chinese, 13,000 Indians, natives of Malabar, Klings, and Bengalese, and 6000 Arabs and Persians. Each of these races contains in itself five or six varieties of castes of different origins, and the town seems to be a pit of variegated patchwork, where the streets inhabited by the members of each tribe ought to be called Borneo, Peking, Delhi, Benares, Coromandel, Sinai, and Teheran. In the centre 500 or 600 Europeans have their houses of business, whose arcades form the "Commercial Square," round a muddy fountain. Beyond the ordinary transactions of rice, coffee, and cotton, there are a certain number of less pacific merchants, who sell muskets, rifles, and cannon. It seems that the Malay and Chinese pirates are capital clients for these men of business. They make fine profits out of these warlike weapons, and cut out considerable work for our navy.

I knew the Malays, and their quarter did not interest me; I passed by the Chinese, knowing that I could study them at my leisure in the Celestial Empire; but the Bengalese, the natives of Malabar, and the Arabs proved very attractive to me in their eccentric huts.

I looked for some reflections of the countries which will not fall in my way. The former have a grave and dignified bearing, regular features, a soldierlike appearance, great moustaches, and magnificent eyes. In every one one seems to recognise a rajah of the valley of Cashmere, under a red cotton turban twisted about twenty times round the head; a white upper dress falls to the knee, below which appears the bronze leg. It is from their race that the handsome "mandours" are chosen, a sort of policeman and servant, who go before the white men to make way for them.

They are merciless lictors, and walk about amongst the crowd with haughty looks, exercising summary justice in a manner inexpressibly Asiatic. During the first half-hour after our landing, some twenty coolies, who had carried our luggage ashore in pirogues, came to ask for their money. The two haughty red-scarfed mandours who kept the door of our garden thought they were already paid, and so fell upon them and beat them violently with the courbache, the blows resounding horribly on their bare bodies. The more the unhappy men tried to get away the more the mandours beat them. Hastily running up, I had immense trouble to make our jealous purse-bearers understand that I wished to give the coolies very different payment from blows.

The women of Malabar are very black, but very picturesque, with the gold rings in their noses, lips, and ears; and there is an indescribable misty look in their wild eyes. After sunset, they place in their ebony hair pins supporting balls of glass which enclose sparkling

fireflies. When simply draped like the ancient Romans in some white material, which presents a strange contrast with their onyx-like faces, they walk beneath the natural vaults of the banana trees, their aureola-like head-dresses throw out a trembling light amidst the shadows, and the dark outlines look like ghosts. These poor women, who belong to a dreamy race, seem exiled here, and live on the produce of work which takes them years to accomplish.

One of them sold me a sandal-wood box covered with a mosaic of ivory, nickel, and silver, which I thought lovely. I don't know whether, like a new Pandora, she feared that the box might bring me some misfortune, for, doubtless in consequence of some Asiatic custom, she shut up in it some of the fluttering fireflies which lighted up her head, and then let them fly away into the night. It was a symbol of the many bright illusions which appear only to fade away, and leave such bitterness behind if Hope is not there.

Beside the gardens and huts of the natives of Malabar were the "campongs" of the Arabs, whose handsome faces would make very striking pictures. Their trade in tigers' skins and Paris wares enriches them sufficiently to furnish them with magnificent dresses, and they seem to be the wealthiest people on these shores. It amused us very much to walk about the gay streets of this Oriental camp, where the English uniforms of sepoy and artillerymen presented a strange contrast. As it is not considered at all the thing to go on foot before the natives, we sometimes took one of the

numerous carriages which are always at the service of white men in tropical towns. It is a sort of cage of light wood, a closed box without windows, of which all the upper part is composed of blinds; a double roof painted white protects it from the heat of the sun. They are drawn by one wretched little pony from the Celebes, and as there is no box-seat, two jolly little Indians, who act as coachmen, run on foot by the side of the horse; one holds the reins, the other the whip, and the rattling of old iron forms the bass to their loud and shrill cries. Their livery is of the simplest description, being formed of a ribbon about an inch and a half to two inches in width tied round their waist. When they feel tired, they lie down on the shafts, showing us their white teeth and shaved heads, nice little mounds abounding in game, for which a cover is left just at the top, a little curly tuft, by which by-and-by the Prophet will draw them up into heaven.

Then we went to get a breath of fresh air in the environs of the town, which are far less picturesque than what we saw in Java. It is a jungle with a few cocoa-nut trees, under which wretched huts are sheltered. Sometimes we went towards New Harbour, where we visited the 'Donnai,' a magnificent vessel belonging to the Messageries Impériales, and sometimes to the most distant points of the isle, from whence we could see the straits that separate us from the continent of Asia and the possession of the Toumongong of Djohore. But really there is nothing to see, nothing to interest us in the surroundings of our prison, and the heat is overpowering.

Our evenings only are pleasant, whether spent in the Governor's palace, where we are invited by Colonel Cavanagh, who is one of the heroes of the Indian Mutiny, where he lost a leg; or in the gardens which shade the Catholic Church, where Monseigneur Beurel and Père Patriat told us with perfect simplicity the touching story of the martyred missionaries to Malacca, Borneo, and Cambodia. The Bishop, who has been settled at Singapore for forty years, has built a beautiful church, and speaks in great admiration of some of the Protestants in the island, who assisted him with considerable sums of money. I asked him what he thought of Java, which I felt sure he must have seen, but he said to me, "Whenever I write to the Governor-General of the Dutch Indies to ask permission to make that journey, he always answers with his own hand, inviting me to stay with him at Buitenzorg, promising that I shall be treated with hospitality and honour, but only on condition that I should not go about the island, and that I should abstain from any attempt to convert the people; so I preferred not going, as I have no object in travelling apart from my sacred office." This conversation confirmed my preconceived opinion on the systematic restriction in religious matters on the part of the Colonial Government.

On Sunday we found the church full of Chinese and men of colour. They sing the litanies in Chinese, with a succession of tsing-tching-tsang-hong-king-sing, to a kind of jig tune, which would send one into fits of laughter were it not for the sacredness of the place.

Owing to the various nations of the congregation, the priest was forced to preach in five successive languages: Chinese, Malay, Malabar, pigeon-English, and English.

The only curiosity in Singapore is the garden of a rich Chinese, who arrived here in great want in his youth, and has now become, thanks to his own intelligence, the victualler to the English and French steamboat companies, the ships of war, and all large undertakings. His name is Wam-Poa. His drawing-rooms are built on piles above little artificial lakes, full of red fish, and various beautiful works of art from the Celestial Empire are collected in several coloured kiosques. The garden is a sort of inanimate menagerie. Imagine figures made of iron wire, and representing crocodiles, dragons, ducks, dolphins, dogs, and elephants; imagine creeping plants, luxuriant and feathery, wreathed together and covered with moss, forming a many-coloured texture, through which the birds cut their way as soon as they leave their distorted cages; on the grass are animals exquisitely imitated in flowers and leaves. Then come trees tortured and twisted and bent into monsters or baskets.

Wam-Poa has also a living menagerie, where, amongst other things, he has some splendid specimens of the hog tribe with actual manes, kept by a swineherd who is none other than a fine black monkey. Wam-Poa is as fond of orchids as he is of dollars, which is saying a good deal for a Celestial.

I ought to say a word here for the Chinese, who are

sent out by their country, and whose importation is objected to by the Australian and Dutch governments. At Singapore, which is essentially a trading port, and where the five or six hundred Europeans are nearly all bankers or traders, the Chinese, numbering some thousands, act as clerks. Every time that I went to Guthrie and Co. to have a little bit more taken from our letter of credit, I found myself facing twenty-five clerks from the Celestial Empire, in white dresses, with their pens stuck behind their ears. They spoke English very passably, went through all the proper formalities with the letter, and wrote their interminable additions in English quite free from error and with the most intense politeness, and a perfect understanding of the whole proceeding. They certainly are very powerful auxiliaries, and pre-eminently useful in a first-class commercial warehouse. Not only as clerks, but as foremen and supercargoes, they render the most valuable service, and the division of work, thanks to their arrangements, has given a wonderful increase to the interior activity of Singapore.

I do not think there can be any positive theory as to the immigration of this race; the elements of the first society on which it imposes itself must decide its fate, and they must submit to be judged by the result as a tree by its fruits. Here they are good; so much the better. But that is no proof that they will not be dangerous at Melbourne and Batavia. Those towns have no resemblance with this factory, which is a mere quay where everything comes, a transport office on land

of no extent, which produces nothing, where the Asiatic races alone form a settled population, and, finally, where there are no colonial interests to protect. Keeping clear of political animosity, they have only one enemy from whom they are forced to defend themselves—the tigers. Statistics prove that these beasts eat more than four hundred people in the year, and they are unable to clear the jungle of these savage inhabitants.

The year 1866 terminated for us in the light of fireworks. Every day of the coming year will probably see the eternal discharge of crackers, of which the semi-Chinese races are so fond; at every step we took in the streets, the boys incessantly thrust them between our legs. But, for the great occasion, the ships in the roads joined their rejoicings with those on dry land; the tall masts, as well as the cocoa-nut trees, were glittering with brilliant lights; while the excited crowd followed the movements of a balloon carrying some Bengal lights which a slight breeze rapidly bore away, and soon the moving star was veiled from sight by huge trees.

As for us, we hope that our star is all right! There she is, shining in the peaceful heavens of the East. She points out Europe to us for the opening year. What quantities of things we have seen since the fogs on the Thames! But, after seeing new people and picturesque scenes every day, we have become insensibly accustomed to this constant variety; and any traveller falling suddenly into the midst of it, as though from a balloon, without any intermediate sights,

would find many things extraordinary which no longer strike us.

But now I must tell you about our visit to the opium-eaters' quarter. Two police officers came with us to make all safe (which would be impossible without them) into that part of the Chinese town to which this vice is limited. We entered a bamboo shed. Some thirty Chinese were extended on filthy mats; at the side of each a small cocoa-nut oil-lamp was burning. Some were already asleep, lying half-naked on their backs, their hands swinging and their eyes shut. Others were buying for fourpence, from the Chinese who is licensed to keep the establishment, a small packet of juicy greenish opium the size of a peppermint drop, and spread on a sheet of tin. They come every night about seven or eight o'clock, and go (if they can wake from their stupor) when the sun begins to rise. Excited with the thoughts of the enjoyment that they will taste with the first whiffs, they settle themselves, turning round and round with countenances expressive of the lowest gratification, before the lamp with its flickering light and the long, filthy bamboo pipe. Heating a needle red hot, which they twist about with delight, they cover it with the opium, which clings to it, and place a ball the size of a pea on the fine hole of the bowl of the pipe. Then they throw themselves on their backs and burn the opium in the lamp; three or four whiffs feverishly inhaled and then blown out through the quivering nostrils—and the ecstasy begins. Their eyes close and open alternately, their lips hang list-

lessly, their chests rise and swell with enjoyment, then fall with a sigh! They faint away, and remain almost insensible, and their expression loses all animation; but the eyes, pale, convulsed, and repulsive, remain fixed on the dim lamp; the bamboo pipe rolls to the earth, and the man, overpowered by a trance, is thus a dirty corpse in this nightly cemetery beneath the thick and heavy cloud of poison.

I cannot tell you what a fearful impression the sight of this room caused me, when the hideous degradation of fifty human creatures does not prevent others from entering and following their example. The stinging smoke blinded us, the disgusting smell sickened us. And here, they tell us, these filthy and debased creatures come and dream of the delights of paradise. But no, the vilest degradation is all they can find! They showed us young Chinese men only twenty years old already worn to skeletons, the very marrow of their bones consumed by this vice, and with not more than two years life left in them. They are so hardened by habit that, while a novice can only smoke in a night what he would buy for fourpence or sixpence, they can consume a dollar's worth.¹ Every night they return, for it has become impossible to digest any sort of food in the daytime if they have not inhaled this poisonous smoke throughout the night. They smoke that they may live, yet they die of it.

This is one of the frightful and characteristic pecu-

¹ The value of a dollar varies from 4s. 1d. to 4s. 5d.

liarities of the Chinese race. Can you imagine these half-dead creatures overcome by drunken swoons in this filthy hole, their skeleton arms tremblingly trying to re-light a pipe that is nearly extinct at a dying lamp, their withered fingers clinging to the mat on which they wallow with haggard eyes, the perspiration suddenly streaming down their bodies where the ribs protrude, and the head turned round exposing the open throat, from whence a last poisonous whiff escapes! And this degradation is the supreme happiness of an entire people! I saw a monkey jumping briskly about on the desk where the accounts of this horrible place of entertainment are kept, and he seemed to me to be the only human and sane creature in this hideous assembly.

There is an entire village of these kind of huts. The monopoly of the opium trade has been conceded by the Government to a large Chinese company, and brings in 4000*l.* a month. Before the rules were made which restrict it to certain places, and which inflict the heaviest punishments on any who come at all beyond the prescribed limits, every hut in Singapore was as hateful as the one we were in to-night. But this half measure which restrains the ravages of vice does not clear from off the Chinese a fearful stain, nor does it exonerate England from a most dishonourable trade. One's blood boils to think how low and bad the instincts of the Asiatic people are; but it is not for a Christian and civilised nation to trade unscrupulously and to furnish so despicable a customer with such a poisonous article of sale. The famous opium war shows a sad

page in history to honest men. And if the annual export of Indian opium brings in the largest revenue to the greatest colony in the world, it also brings misery to some four hundred million inhabitants of the Celestial Empire. But suppress opium, and there is an end of India! People have tried to compare the opium trade with that of European spirits, and, pointing out the harmless effect of a small quantity and the dangers of excess in both, try to prove that they are equal and, consequently, both lawful. But there is this immense difference, that the delirium of opium is irresistible and the extent of intoxication impossible to guard against; once let a man taste it, and he will not be satisfied till he has died of it.

We wanted something more than the fresh air and cool temperature of the night to restore us after such a sight. The police took us to a Chinese theatre, a great bamboo erection. They took us behind the scenes, where some hundred actors were daubing over their faces with scarlet, blue, yellow, white, and silver; they paint themselves here in thick layers and put one over the other. But I remember that I was not to speak about the Chinese till I got to China, where, no doubt, they will be still more Chinese; and passing over a very remarkable play, I will only tell you that the evening ended tragically. In passing along the upper galleries from one theatre to another, climbing ladder after ladder, we went into an outside terrace, where several friendly Chinese showed us, through a back window, a supper where two hundred of their country

people of both sexes were collected, using four hundred little sticks to eat green preserves. Suddenly a dull thud was heard some sixty feet below us in the dark space. The Prince and I were side by side, and our first cry was, "Are you there, Fauvel?" He was not three yards off, and replied at once. If the heavens had opened, we could not have felt more joy than at the relief we experienced then. Then we were all three safe, but a Chinese, one of our guides, who was walking just behind us, had fallen head foremost some sixty feet down into a paved lane; for the terrace on which we were was only a yard wide, and had no parapet. We were ignorant of this in consequence of the darkness of the night, and the accident might easily have happened to any of us. We hastened down, and found the poor wretch crushed and dying on the stones. We gave money, and desired that he might be taken to the hospital. A yelling crowd began to collect; they chose to attribute the catastrophe to the "dogs from the West," and would have liked to kill us. We set off at full speed, headed by the police, and it was about time.

The settlement of Singapore seems to me to be the most complete and distinct type of an Indian factory. It was taken possession of in a manner more or less lawful, closely contested certainly, but by those who coveted it, not by those who were victimised. The action was doubtful as to morality, but permitted, as are all colonial acquisitions. The position is exceptional in a com-

mercial point of view, being the point where are concentrated the transactions of one-half of Asia with the other half and with Europe. An immense importance is given to an island which produces nothing and manufactures nothing, by the simple fact of the English flag having been planted there. Its internal principles differ in origin from those of all the neighbouring ports in a radius of 6000 miles, but possess such advantages as to change all the laws of the surrounding centres of trade; finally, by a gradual change, that which begins with a fort commanded by a lieutenant-colonel will finish with an internal economy like that of Australia. Such have in less than fifty years become the principal features of this savage island of jungle, now the necessary key to the extreme East. But even if this factory were to fail—which is impossible—and to lose the extreme influence it possesses over an immense trade, Singapore has already justified in the most striking manner the great hopes centred in it at its commencement. When the English expedition for the Chinese war passed close by here, at Anjer, Lord Elgin stopped at Singapore in the Government bungalow, which has now made way for Fort Canning. One night news came that the mutiny had broken out in India. Seized with terrible anxiety, he held counsel the whole night through in this memorable spot, and by sunrise, feeling sure that he was deciding aright, he took upon himself the responsibility of sending to India the troops destined for China, and gave his famous orders, which started the English fleet for Calcutta

instead of Canton. England owes the preservation of the Indian Empire to the prompt decision of this man of genius, and to the perfect position of Singapore as a centre for strategic purposes.

Twenty-five miles long, and fourteen miles broad, presenting a surface of 206 square miles, Singapore remained till 1818 a mere refuge for several Malay tribes, who were hidden in the impenetrable jungle. It was no less insignificant in appearance than the innumerable coral reefs which we saw all the way from the Torres Straits as far as the first point of the Asiatic continent. This point, which is no other than the peninsula of Malacca, constitutes the kingdom of Djohore, of which Bandahara, the chief of the Singapore Islanders, was the vassal. But when England lost her magnificent possessions in Java, she hoped to keep some footing in the Malay Archipelago, and, thanks to the far-seeing policy of Sir Stamford Raffles, the ex-governor of the lost colony, chose to retain her supremacy even in the place whence she had been expelled by the treaty, and to create a moral empire, so to speak, taking as a centre this island of Singapore, which till then had been a mere nothing, but which it was thought might be called upon to play an immensely important part. The idea was to turn it into a free port, the only one on the chief road to China.

Sir Stamford Raffles, who was clever and energetic, and very knowing on all colonial questions and Oriental intrigues, planted the English flag on the island without any ceremony, the tigers alone objecting at first; then

he proposed a treaty to the Sultan and to the Toumongong of Djohore. On their side the Dutch bought Rhio for an immense sum; the English replied by buying Singapore for the sum of 6440*l.*, which they gave to the Sultan, with a life income of 3120*l.*, besides giving 5200*l.* to the Toumongong, his viceroy, with a life income of 1680*l.*

This would seem to be the simplest proceeding in the world, but as it took place in the East, the following was the result. The Sultan of Rhio, Abd-ul-Rahman Schah, in his treaty of sale of Rhio with the Dutch, pretended that for the sum of 320*l.* a month he had also sold them Singapore, of which he disputed the possession with the Sultan of Djohore. So you see that on the one hand the English asked the Malay tribes at Singapore, "Will you be eaten after the fashion of Hassan Schah, the Sultan of Djohore's son?" and on the other hand the Dutch asked, "Will you be eaten after the fashion of Abd-ul-Rahman Schah?" But without giving them time to reply, "We won't be eaten at all," Sir Stamford Raffles sent a ship to fetch Hassan Schah, who was living very quietly, and causing him to be proclaimed the true Sultan by Toumongong and Bandahara, he made him sign the contract, and that is why Singapore is English.

There is always something in this taking possession of the Indies like the works of a steam-engine; an amount of friction, groping about, pressure, and working of innumerable valves, owing to which the steam always ends by getting out, so as to set in motion what till then

was an inert mass. This action enforced upon the populations in possession of the soil is so far justifiable as it is for their good, and though the actual rights of the first possessors of the soil are thus violated, and though it may not be just in these political masquerades to make use of the mere shadow of a claimant as an indispensable tool, and to interfere in the disputes of a feeble Rajah against a powerful Sultan, for the sake of weakening both, and remaining the sole possessor, I must acknowledge that there is evidently more in it than the lion's share, and the right of might—namely, the effect of that law of nature which obliges the Asiatic races to bow before superior races, as the price of their common prosperity. There is but one thing for which I am sorry, which is that we Frenchmen have not set up some tricolor flag in this pass between the Indian and Chinese seas; for supposing some war in which England and Holland sided against us, we should not have a single place in which our fleets could procure provisions. While in the face of Dutch dominion throughout the Malay Archipelago, England has secured three depots, Penang, Malacca, and Singapore (the length of the peninsula which commands the "Straits"), we should have our road stopped towards our great colony of Cochin China. It is true that this is wonderfully well chosen, and cut out for a great future, but it proves that we are not more troubled than others with philanthropic scruples, as to exercising the right of force, and making use of interloping rajahs who are pretenders, or forcing ourselves on

the population of Asia. We must have a French Singapore, for it is too hard to find Gibraltars everywhere.

Since the day of its foundation, the British settlement has made almost inconceivable progress. True, it does not extend much; it only produces some sacks of pepper and a few bottles of cocoa-nut oil, and rises to no great perfection in anything it exports. It does not in the least conduce to making the wares more marketable that stop there on their road. How, then, is its fortune made? Well, that began at a time when all the Dutch that surrounded it drew their principal revenues from export taxes, and the East India Company carried on the same system, and Sir Stamford Raffles, by declaring Singapore to be a free port, drew thence not only all the trading vessels from the neighbouring islands, but all the spices which up to that time had been monopolised by Holland. By this simple declaration he gave so heavy a blow to the Dutch "Maatshappij" that, to entice vessels back to their ports, it was obliged to considerably diminish the exorbitant taxes, and also to declare several articles free. But no geographical position is to be compared to that chosen by the English statesman, and here is what will prove it.

In 1818 the profits of trade were nil, and in 1823 they had already amounted to 2,150,000*l.*; from that time till 1863 the entries increased from 1,200,000*l.* to 6,500,000*l.*, and the exports have risen from 950,000*l.* to 5,500,000*l.* If moral force could be valued, what thousands of millions it would take to represent English

influence extended from this centre by the 1279 vessels, weighing 471,000 tons, which every year spread it amongst the people of Asia, as though they were the multiplied rays from one lighthouse. At first the neighbouring islands sent a few coasters to this British factory; the next year several ships; then, taking a sudden leap, they corresponded direct with London. But the Archipelago is so rich that, when one port leaves off supplying Singapore, it is replaced by another, which rises into commercial life, encouraged and enriched by the Queen of the Seas. It appears that it does as much for Asiatic traders as for the colonies; it protects their infancy, instructs them in the language of business, guides their first steps, and increases their wants; as soon as they are full grown, it leaves them to themselves, and then of their own accord they enter into relations with it, which create their own greatness, while bringing in a small contingent to the London market.

But at Singapore there is much more than a mere office for collecting taxes between the neighbouring countries, which are opening out for trade, like Siam and Borneo. Its central position between Calcutta, Burmah, Java, and China, make it a station that is destined to equalise all the fluctuations of trade in the East. Wares are sent there from London, destined for China, Japan, Java, or Siam. When there, they are then sent on to the port where they are most needed. It is the same with rice and opium from India: if the price is low in China, they send it to Java, and *vice versâ*.

It really is very interesting to spend a few hours on the quays at Singapore, and watch the movements of produce from all parts of the world. Innumerable boats and coolies are employed in transshipping or warehousing the goods. The chief exports from England are—cotton cloths, weapons, and iron; from America, ice; from Australia, horses and coal; from India, corn, gum, and opium (of which 60,000*l.* worth is consumed in Singapore alone); China, gold, tea, camphor, and alum; Cochin China, rice; Manilla, tobacco and sugar; the Dutch Malay islands, gutta-percha and coal; and from the Celebes, sandal-wood and swallows' nests. This brilliant collection has paled the glory of Batavia, and reduced Saïgon to a state of dependency on Singapore.

But although so many great results have been attained in less than fifty years, you need not imagine that the English colonists consider themselves to be at the height of their greatness. The settlement, which belonged to the East India Company, was but the dependant of a dependant till 1858, at which period the company gave up its power into the hands of the Colonial Minister; and it is still under the government of Bengal. Although the governor and councillors appointed by the crown have always been just and superior men, Singapore now wishes to burst the ties which connect it with the Indies, and which both hinder its material produce and cripple the energies of its internal government. I am sure that the time is not far distant when this salutary division will be

accomplished, and when a council elected in the settlement by the European residents (in fact, a local parliament) will give a new impulse to this great work. When the revenues of a factory are based on a system of rents, as in this case, it is only on the spot that the placing and displacing of the weights can be properly judged, so as to equalise the balance.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE 'CHOW-PHYA.'

Departure for Bangkok—Navigation in a Siamese vessel—A shoal of fish in the engine—The sparkling appearance of earthenware pagodas—Light dress of the Siamese—Where to find a lodging.

10th January, 1867—at sea, Gulf of Siam, on board the '*Chow-Phya*.'—The long-looked-for steamer appeared for a short time in the roads of Singapore. We rushed to the ticket office (for office, read dirty hole), and our return tickets on variegated parchment were delivered to us for 40*l.* a head. For a journey of 1700 miles in a very inferior boat, it was a good price; but when one visits the country of the great king, what must one not expect to pay?

We embarked at five o'clock in the evening, in the midst of the most fearful confusion, and before the screw had given a couple of hundred turns, we were forced to stop and make a signal to the police boat. The sepoy whom we called were obliged to handcuff and carry off our mate, who, either mad or dead drunk, threw himself on some of the crew, and broke a capstan bar over their backs. The '*Jasmin*,' a French vessel, saluted the Prince by lowering her flag three times, and soon Singapore was lost in shade.

Since then our nutshell has not ceased to roll in the most fearful manner, amidst the blows of the uncertain, confused, and chopping waves of the Chinese Sea.

This 'Chow-Phya' is a peculiar, very unsafe, and filthy vessel. The narrow deck is covered with bales, like small haycocks, and you can imagine how the movement makes them roll about in every direction. The hull is deep in the water with the weight of iron, and so badly trimmed astern that, when a mere ordinary gale rocks us, it is not only the foam and crest of the waves, but the green billows themselves, which sweep over the taffrail. Then the wheel is stuck up in the centre, like a bridge on piles, from whence we are overlooked by a mass of coal, casks, sacks filled with rice till they nearly burst, and overflowing chests.

The crew is Chinese, and consists of forty-two men; and as soon as the wind had turned sufficiently to the E.N.E., to admit of our putting up sail, it was very amusing to see these long-tailed puppets scrambling up the high masts, without any rope ladders, only scaling the shrouds and backstays, holding them tight in their clasped toes as if they were squirrels.

Our cooking also was done by Chinese. Two greasy offensive fellows provided us with decoctions of mouldy fish, green eggs that were very nearly chickens, and disgusting cocoa-nut oil, which red pepper alone enabled us to swallow. The larder is a box fastened on the bridge near the compass, in which there is a confused mixture of onions, oranges, lard, pine-apples, and eggs broken by the rolling of the ship, all forming a

floating omelette of all the colours of the rainbow. Everything else in this extraordinary ship is in keeping. Not only is there not a cabin or hole where we can collect to eat, but there is not even a table on board. So, twice a day the repast is spread on the skylight, in the middle of the deck, and we arrange ourselves around it, trying to get out of the way by doubling up our inconveniently long legs. Every wave which breaks amidships, swamps us, and at the same time swamps the plates and dishes, turning their contents into a mess of salt water. Then the wind shakes our spoons, so that they always arrive at our mouths empty, while every one sprinkles his neighbour with grease. Our captain, the adventurer, who is a specimen of the "distinguished pirate" on the Malay seas, alone finds everything pleasant and laughs heartily.

Our companions are—an English merchant from Siam, the wife of the doctor of the English consulate with her two daughters, the old French lady from the 'Minister Franzen van de Putte,' with her exasperating cat, and a small Asiatic child, which was confided to our care as to fosterfathers by Monseigneur Beurel. This baby is called "Ludovic Lamache." We look after him as well as we can, so as to restore him in safety to his father, who is an old boatswain of a French corvette, and at present instructor and generalissimo of the King of Siam's armies. The child is the same plum colour as the country nymph whom the illustrious soldier has chosen for his better half. If he did

not possess a toy with noisy bells, and a stomach quite unfitted for the sea, even at feeding times, he would be elicious. While watching the little one, I am writing to you on my knees, keeping as steady as I can in spite of the rolling, thanks to a rocking chair, which rocks evenly on the greasy bridge. Besides all this, there are so many white ants that I have been obliged to surround myself with a circle of insect powder. You must come to these shores to understand the tortures of the terribly sharp bites which these little foes inflict, who always leave their heads in your skin.

For five days we have led this singular existence; as to the nights, sleep makes them pass quickly, and although the dews of night and early morning are cold and unwholesome on deck, we prefer to shiver there, wrapt up in our damp cloaks till five o'clock in the morning. By mid-day we are suffocated with heat.

But all this is paradise compared with the condition of the three hundred Malay, Chinese, and Arab passengers, who are clustered in groups fore and aft, on bales of goods, above the ebb and flow of water which we are constantly shipping. They smoke opium and play dice; these are the two characteristic vices of their races, and as they are heavily taxed on land, at sea they give themselves up to them with indescribable delight. This human ant-hill, which exhales the most abominable smells, is noisy, offensive, and cowardly. Each heavy wave that comes, they all begin to yell, as if we were going to sink; then they chant the Koran, get drunk, and fight.

There is one great man amongst them, and the captain allows him to come and smoke his cigar on the poop. It is Nai-Poun, a Siamese prince, who is always laughing, although his story is sad enough. He was amongst the envoys sent by the King of Siam to carry the produce of his kingdom to the Exhibition at Paris. There were five commissioners, and the King gave each of them 1000*l.* to spend in France to do honour to his name. While waiting a week at Singapore for the European mail, this envoy extraordinary spent it all in toys, losses at play, suppers, &c. Finally, glowing with success, he took the opportunity of insulting the Siamese Consul, and to such an extent that the said consul let the other four continue their road to Paris (though they had also abused their privileges), and sent back poor Nai-Poun to his king. The captain, with very bad taste, never left off chaffing him, saying that his lord and master would certainly cut off his head, and then going through the motions of beheading on the bulwarks. But Nai-Poun met this British sarcasm with an Asiatic smile, and, crossing his legs, took a great and childish pleasure in puffing out whiffs of tobacco in even and floating circles, which the breeze carried off like little blue aureolas.

Such was the appearance of the vessel in which we were lucky enough to find a passage from Singapore to Siam. The Chinese proprietor must make immense profits. Sacks are piled up to the boats, and everything charged at so exorbitant a price that the freight of this vessel of 400 tons, for a six days' journey,

amounts to 5120%. These unknown and unadvanced regions are certainly a prey to adventurers, who reign powerfully here.

This evening we are approaching land during a magnificent sunset, whose crimson rays light up the groups of the Koh-Kwang-Noï, Koh-Luem, Koh-Kran, and Koh-Ryn islands. We can distinguish amongst these islands dark grottoes and coral caves, over which the waves break; while to the north are the outlines of the low and marshy shores of the kingdom.

11th January.—At daybreak we took advantage of the tide to cross the bar of the great river which empties itself into the gulf, the Me-Nam-Chow-Phya. At low tide it is only covered with three feet of water. This ridge of sand and mud is completely hidden by a bamboo stockade, like a straight line of fortification, to which are fastened the enormous nets used by Siamese fishermen. We steered through a channel about fifty yards wide, left like a door of entrance to the besieging waves. But it seemed that the aquatic sport had been very great, and some thousands of prisoners were trying to get away through the straits we had crossed. Suddenly the engine stopped, without any previous orders. Great confusion on board; terror and anxious inquiries from the three hundred natives. "Had we touched some rock, and were we about to sink?" Nothing of the sort; it was a whole shoal of fish that were gradually being sucked up by the water into the boiler, and who stuck like living glue in all

the pipes and valves. They were mostly sardines, bold little fish! As you may imagine, we were obliged to sound, and clear the works, before we set the engine going again. We had already called the 'Chow-Phya' a tea-kettle, and after frying all the little fish in its boiler, it sufficiently justified its name.

Gradually the flat shores of the Me-Nam came nearer, and, still leaving a breadth of some eight hundred yards, spread before our eyes most unwholesome-looking swamps of mangrove trees. You must not come here for beautiful scenery. It is impossible to see anything more tangled, damp, and impenetrable. Advancing towards the north, inundated rice plantations replaced the mangroves for some twenty miles on each side, occasionally looking rather picturesque by the mirage representing oases of banana and cocoa-nut trees. On the other hand, the river is covered with white cranes, red or white ibis, kingfishers as big as crows, all sparkling in the sun. The most beautiful amongst them is the "karien," of a silver-grey colour, with a black throat and a scarlet head; its height is greater than a man's. The Siamese consider it sacred; they believe that the souls of the Buddhas go into these birds at their seventeenth transmigration, especially into the white ones, and they never kill them. It is the same with the souls of their relations, and we dared not fire at a canary bird, for fear of being accused of homicide on the person of a grandfather or uncle of a Siamese.

At eleven o'clock we dropped anchor before the first

little Siamese village, Paknam. The captain landed to make his statement to the mandarin of the place, and to pay into the king's treasury through him the customs dues, which are three per cent. of the value, and also to leave his guns on land. Any vessel passing this limit without unarming would be the king's prisoner; and beyond this, if the declaration of the cargo is not scrupulously exact, the mandarins of the custom-house inflict a first penalty of 96%, and the total cost amounts to three times as much. This first glimpse of the government of the great king shows that he is not above the system of protection, and that there is an immense distance between Singapore and Siam. During the discussions between the authorities and our captain, we admired a pagoda, which rose out of the middle of the river like a beautiful island. It was a collection of white buildings, with a great tower two hundred feet high, surmounted with a sharp spire, and a whole family of similar small towers scattered about on the water. Tiny boats were winding in and out amongst them. One large green banana leaf serves for masts, sails, and rigging, held in the hand of the crouching fisherman. The light breeze spreads them across the water against the stream, and the little fleet presents an aspect both primitive and fascinating.

We went up the river for three hours. On the left are unarmed forts, and flank batteries overgrown with shrubs and creepers. It was the "Dutch folly," the vestiges of the unsuccessful attempt which the Maatschappij made a century ago to create another Java.

On the right is a shed six hundred yards long, and covered with palm leaves, which shelters the "chang-kou-ta," or sacred chain; this is made of several hundred great beams of teak wood, two feet square, fastened together by great iron rings, and intended for the defence of the river. The Siamese Vaubans are quite convinced that by throwing this chain across the river, they will stop the European gunboats. But as we passed this antediluvian means of defence, we saw that the King depended also on more modern engines of war. We passed one of the thirty-four gunboats belonging to the fleet, carrying the long golden pennon and scarlet flag, with the white elephant designed upon it. I say the King, and not the kings, for there is only one left now of the two kings who ruled over Siam, and were formerly united by the Asiatic charter, like the celebrated brothers are by a membrane. Ten months ago King No. 2 died. He was in command of the navy, and wore the uniform of our post captains.

The vessels which he paid for out of his own privy purse (an expression quite as unusual, and admitting of as much elasticity in Asia as in Europe) were at anchor dotted along the whole of our road. They were gracefully built corvettes and launches, but now greatly to be pitied, their masts falling to pieces, the hulls cracking for want of paint, the guns rusting, and the hold rotting! This, it seems, is a Siamese custom, equally with the greatest man in the kingdom to the poorest fellah. As soon as he dies, all his personal

property must die also, reverently abandoned to the destroying hand of time. The sailor king who was elevated to the adoration of the Siamese passed his life in nursing a dream. He would have died happy, doubly happy, if he could have taken his squadron to Singapore! But although he was the Jean Bart of fresh water, the tritons of the gulf proved hostile to him, and every time that he started on this glorious expedition he was forced to return in deep mortification at being unable to discover the English island.

In making the journey the other way, we were more fortunate, and finally perceived beneath the palms and cocoa-nut trees on the shores the slender spires and distant minarets of Bangkok, the capital of the kingdom of Siam. The green marshes, the refuge of crocodiles and serpents, give place to the foundations of bamboo huts, and the entrance to the suburbs is marked by extensive terraces and wooden forts. Not till then did Nāi-Poun cease his incessant bursts of laughter. A livid pallor spread over his yellow face, and the tearful eyes expressed intense fear. When we remarked upon this to the captain, he explained to us that these forts are the pleasure grounds of his Majesty, where a simple operation sends the soul of the patient into the brain of a white sparrow. For any who offend the king, poor creatures, here is their guillotine. And this was what threw a shadow over the return to his native country and the bosom of his family of our guilty friend, as he got further on his road. He will

soon have finished his journey from Asia to Europe—and to a still more distant country.

Behind a bend of the Me-Nam (the mother of the waters), the entire town of Bangkok appeared in sight. I do not believe that there is a sight in the world more magnificent or more striking. This Asiatic Venice displays all her wonders over an extent of eight miles. The river is broad and grand; in it more than sixty vessels lie at anchor. The shores are formed by thousands of floating houses, whose curiously formed roofs make an even line, while the inhabitants in brilliant-coloured dresses appear on the surface of the water. On the dry land which commands this first amphibious town, the royal city extends its battlemented walls and white towers. Hundreds of pagodas rear their gilded spires to the sky, their innumerable domes inlaid with porcelain and glittering crystals, and the embrasures polished and carved in open work. The horizon was bounded to right and left by sparkling roofs, raised some six or seven stories, enormous steeples of stone work, whose brilliant coating dazzled the eyes, and bold spires from 150 to 200 feet in height, indicating the palace of the king, which reflected all the rays of the sun like a gigantic prism. It seemed as though we had before us a panorama of porcelain cathedrals.

The first general view of the Oriental Venice surpassed all that we could have hoped for in our travellers' dreams. We longed to get into gondolas and

go through the lively canals which are the streets of the floating town, and where the bustle, animation, and noise bewildered us. And then shall we be permitted to see these sacred pagodas, these royal palaces?

At Singapore we had heard a great deal about Bangkok, and all that was going on in political matters; we knew that we were falling into the midst of a volcano.

The extension of the protectorate of France over Cambodia, which before was tributary to Siam (and which immensely increased our possessions in Cochin China at the expense of our neighbours), treaties recently infringed by the great king, disputed frontiers, Asiatic lies and dawdling, several very undiplomatic thrusts on the part of Europeans—all this established bitter hostilities between the Siamese government and France, and especially between the king's ministers and our Consul, which were cleverly made use of by the English consulate. Not being able unhappily to apply to the former, and not choosing under the circumstances to appeal to the latter, who would have been enchanted to parade his patronage of a prince in the eyes of the Siamese, and thus to weaken French influence, where could we turn our steps, and look for a lodging for the night?

But here, on the left bank of the river, is a church and the missionaries' cross. We will go and knock at this door, which cannot surely shut in the face of an exile, and we shall find shelter beneath its flag which, although French, must here at least be neutral.

Resigning our post of nurse, we returned young Ludovic Lamache to the general of the royal troops, and jumping into one of the many gondolas by which we were surrounded, directed our rowers towards the tower of the mission by signs. We were nearly an hour crossing over, as we had to struggle against the rising tide. Then we were able to study the details of the floating town while we went through its streets—or rather canals—between the crowded houses, of which each one formed a small island. We met and passed thousands of light boats, which are the cabs and omnibuses of Bangkok. The waving paddle makes them glide like nut-shells, from one shop to another. Some were not much more than three feet long, with one Siamese squeezed in between piles of rice, bananas, or fish; others hold fifteen people, and are so crowded that one can hardly see the edge of the boat, which is a hollow palm tree.

The natives have the same coloured skin as the Malays, but men, women, and children shave their heads, leaving on the point of the skull an oval tuft, close cropped, and above the size of your two hands; it gives a sort of cocky, stuck-up look, which is very queer. With this crown of upright hair they brave the sun; any head-dress is unknown. The rest of the dress is not complicated; a piece of stuff, about two feet wide, of red, green, or pink cotton—in fact, a sort of scarf tied round the waist, and passing between the legs fastened before and behind, is the airy costume with which these ladies and gentlemen

gracefully protect themselves from the heat of a tropical sun. Often, but not always, the women throw across their chests a brilliant-coloured ribbon, about a foot in width, which they cross like a shoulder-belt, and whose office is no sinecure. As you perceive, nothing is sewn; an officer's sash and a lawyer's band are dress enough for any woman. The race, which is unmixed, is very hideous: flat noses, mere slits for eyes, prominent cheek-bones, a complexion the colour of tobacco, enormous mouths, gums bleeding from the use of betel-nut, and of very small stature. Such at first sight is the picture of this town, which is as crowded as a shoal of sardines.

The passion of the Siamese women is to cover themselves with ornaments. The women who were rowing boats loaded with fruits, or, crouched on the balconies of the floating houses, eat pink lime whilst playing with their children; the young girls of twelve or fifteen, who disported themselves like naiads in the water, and fled to make way for the rapid approach of our gondola—all wore three or four circlets of gold or silver round their ankles, brilliant chains across their shoulders, and rings on their hands. You must allow on comparing the dresses that this is more graceful than the hideous flannel bags you bathe in at home! Suppress colour and the face, and the Siamese women would be splendid models for sculptors.

As to the children, which are scattered about in profusion here, their dress consists of a daub of yellow

paint; but they are most fascinating little things. I was charmed with them from the very first moment, but it distracts me to think that some day they will become as ugly as their fathers and mothers, and that is saying a good deal! Their little tufts, twisted round a great gold pin, are surrounded by pretty wreaths of white flowers. They are merry and full of tricks, and very pretty to see in their childish nakedness. But they are, however, more dressed than the grown-up young ladies who were bathing. Besides a heap of bracelets and necklaces of gold or copper gilt, with which they are covered like idols, they wear a small vine leaf, cut in the shape of a heart, and hung round the waist by a slight thread. This hanging leaf, which is about two inches long and one and a half broad, marks their caste. For the rich it is gold, for the middle classes silver, for the poor red copper.

These numerous houses which are half kiosques, half rafts, swarming with nearly a million Siamese, no doubt conceal thousands of sights, customs, and curious goings on which must escape us as our gondola carries us through them, as though we were passing before a magic lantern. At the base of each is a small altar of carved wood, surrounded by coloured paper. Before the statuettes of Buddha and the household gods were burning sticks of incense and cocoa-nut oil in red earthenware lacrymatories; on one side were tiger skins, and on the other cocoa-nuts. Further on, tubs of pink lime and indigo were arranged on the terraces

which surround the bamboo houses, and are covered with many-coloured mats. Certainly this is no longer Europe transported to the East; it is Asia itself, with its most striking signs, its strange odours, its unmixed types, its customs guiltless of any intermixture with our civilisation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A WEEK IN THE KINGDOM OF SIAM.

Terror of Callahoun, the Prime Minister — The catechumens' Latin — Temples and priests of Buddha — An artificial gilt mountain — We worship the white elephant — The burning of a Siamese — Royal audiences — The court of the second king — The purchase of a harem — The Siamese country — Père Larnaudie — The King's eight hundred wives, and regiment of Amazons.

THIS first journey through the aquatic town took us to the quay on the left bank, where the Christian Cross is raised. The Church of the Assumption is a modest building, very touching in its simplicity. The exterior ornament in the pointed Asiatic style seems to bring more into notice the nave and altars which are exactly similar to ours, a striking sign of that faith which is so universal over the whole surface of the globe; and a witness here raised beneath the shadow of tropical vegetation, by the unceasing labour of excellent missionaries, who voluntarily exile themselves that they may spread the words of gentleness, temperance, and love. Walking amongst the clumps of banana trees which surround the church, we found several wooden sheds, where these servants of God are lodged. The Abbé Larnaudie received us with open arms, and promised to shelter us and be our guide in the midst of this curious town. He enstalled us in a hut built on piles, and close to the

Mission, where we settled ourselves as well as we could. Knowing naturally not a word of Siamese, we could still exchange a few ideas with the young native catechumens, who spoke something rather like Latin. I will only quote these few words, which were alike adapted to our internal wants, and the local syntax:—" *Boni amici, oportet donare bananas, gallinas, atque porcos.*"

Père Larnaudie advised the Prince to write the very first thing a complimentary letter to the King, to ask an audience of him. It was all done in due form. "The recollection, preserved in history, of the brilliant reception given to the envoys of his ancestor Louis XIV., caused him to hope that he might see the great King of Asia in all his pomp." And this is the address it was necessary to put on the envelope, while trying not to laugh:—"To his Majesty, Somdetch-Phra-Paramendr-Maha-Mongkut, 1st King of Siam." That done, we got into the mission boat, and, guided by Père Larnaudie, who has promised never to leave us, took the letter to Callahoun, the irresponsible prime minister of the kingdom. After a little voyage on the water, and then a walk beneath porticos and round pagodas, we arrived at his palace. He received us in a gallery with gilt columns, and surrounded by some forty slaves crouched in a circle. The statesman in green cotton drawers, and a blue vest embroidered in silver like a police-officer, quickly thrust his bare feet into jewelled babouches, and left his game of chess, calling his son, who was quite unclothed, and engaged in buying a pair of slippers from a Chinese pedlar, and came towards us

very civilly. I never shall forget the terrible face which this poor old gentleman with a turn-up chin made when Père Larnaudie explained to him which was the Prince; his wild eyes showed how completely he had lost his head, not knowing upon what god to call for help.

Being already embroiled with the French Consul, and on the very point of sending an envoy to Paris to protest against the French claims, to expose our invasions, to implore Imperial justice, and call down thunders on its representative at Bangkok, he trembled in every limb at the thought of doing honour to a Prince who did not belong to the Bonaparte family, and of giving an excuse for a protest on the part of the Consul. Added to all this, in Asiatic ideas, the grandson of a dethroned Prince is only fit to be hung high and dry. In Australia and Java the Prince received the most cordial and hospitable welcome, inspired by the purest and noblest sentiments, being raised in the eyes of his hosts by the one consecration wanting to his race, that of misfortune. Here, without meaning it, we carried the wildest terrors into the cabinet of King Mongkut, who, no doubt, imagines that the thunders of French guns will soon be down on them to demand satisfaction. Poor Callahoun! If he only knew with what calmness of soul we contemplate his ridiculous fears, and how we amuse ourselves with the faces he makes! The greatest pleasure we could afford him was to shorten our visit, seeing that, owing to our on-

slaught, happiness has fled from him. What will be the result of the missive to his master!

Going back along the river, we could not contain our admiration of the wonderful effect of the roofs, and the glittering spires and points of which I have spoken to you. But suddenly our oarsmen threw down their paddles and prostrated themselves flat on their stomachs on the benches. What was the matter? We were in sight of the King's palace, and of the quay where he embarks. When in front of it, all the Siamese must bow down, and worship the abode of their sovereign, while great nobles and princes of the blood shut up their umbrellas. If they infringe this law, the sentinels from a post which commands the river have orders to punish them by firing at them out of their air-guns. We landed and enjoyed walking round a great public square, upon which the chief door of the royal residence opens. It is of white stonework; groups of columns in pairs support immense capitals of nine crowns placed one above the other, from which rises a spire more than forty feet high, bold and tapering. The whole is studded with thousands of rose-shaped designs in red, green, yellow, and sky-blue porcelain, which the setting sun lights up like fairy-land. On each side "elephant wharfs" stand out, with white marble balconies, whose grand and severe style of architecture contrasts with the fanciful character of the other designs. When the King goes out, these are his steps, whether he mounts the colossal animals or gets into a palanquin. At the end appear the pointed roofs of the centre palace, whose

polished tiles are dazzling. The beams of the roof, carved in sandal-wood, and cut in delicate lacework, overhang and protect glittering gables; all sorts of lights were thus reflected. It was an endless prism of splendid decorations. Ah! well, travellers who spoke of Siam as a dream of the 'Arabian Nights' only told the truth; the colours of the East are so brilliant, the outlines so eccentric, the architecture so dazzling and covered with ornament, and these twenty palaces joined together hold so much that is wonderful, that it is worth taking the voyage for this one view, and I shall always bless the good fortune that brought me here. No painting could give any idea of it, for the tropical sun alternately casts rays of gold, crimson, pale pink, and misty blue, which play like thousands of electric lights on the marble minarets, the porcelain domes, the crystal spires, the glistening gables, and the brilliant dresses of a strange people.

But while we were watching two regiments of Siamese infantry, dressed in French uniforms, and playing at ball in the public square, round piles of air guns much bigger than themselves, suddenly the drum beat a salute, the soldiers ran to arms, though much inconvenienced by shoes, the population crouched down as if by a magic blow, and a procession advanced, announced by whirlwinds of dust. It was the King. We were about seventy paces from the road he was coming to his palace. Drums, two detachments of infantry, and a whole swarm of mandarins dressed in brilliant silks jogged along before him. He was carried in a

gilded palanquin inlaid with mother-of-pearl, by sixteen men dressed in blue silk; and two large white umbrellas, at the end of inconceivably long handles, sheltered him beneath their wavering and changing shadow. The king was bedizened all over with gold chains, and surmounted by a gilt crown, which looked like a high extinguisher. His suite consisted of some fifteen young princes, mounted on gaily decked ponies, and another palanquin in ivory and lacquer held a whole heap of his daughters. But the procession passed at a smart trot, with such a crowd of mandarins, female slaves, umbrella bearers, and halberdiers that we remained behind bewildered; the moment the King saw us, he signed graciously to us with his hand.

Not far from there are the royal stables, full, not of horses, but of elephants. We examined them minutely. Each animal has his shed of ten square yards, where he is fastened by one foot. We threw them small bunches of green corn; after having saluted us three times by raising their trunks to their full height, they shake our gifts to get off the dust, and swallow them very delicately. Then we saw one ready armed for war; his great tusks were longer than a man, and a crocodile's skin was placed on his head to protect him from the blows of the enemy. A Siamese sergeant-major, wearing a helmet, was perched up on his seat, beneath the shade of a seven-storied umbrella, which is an emblem of royalty; and a quantity of lances, pikes, javelins, clubs, and tomahawks, were arranged around him. The driver was seated behind, and with a sharp,

childish voice guided the colossus of the animal kingdom. We chose to scale this living mountain, too, and feel the rocking motion of its trotting. And oh! how small every one did look from the height, and how the swaying motion reminded us of a rolling sea! We saw twenty elephant huts in succession; I do not know exactly how many there are altogether. But it seems that when the king goes up the country, all the chiefs join him, accompanied by a squadron of elephants; Père Larnaudie has seen as many as seven hundred marching together in perfect order. Even in this century there have been battles where six thousand could be counted in the two camps; and two-and-twenty years ago, when the Annamites invaded one of the provinces of Cambodia, the Siamese general, like a modern Samson, put them all to flight, by surprising them in the night with four hundred elephants to whose tails he had fastened flaming torches.

But before us their performances were more peaceful; some of them disported themselves in perfect freedom in a great court, winking their cunning little eyes (the most cunning it is said, in the animal kingdom), playing a thousand tricks, jumping clumsily, and taking care to avoid one another; it was a regular dance to which the—

“*Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum*”

made a fearful accompaniment. The awkward movements of their unwieldly trunks made us shout with laughter, which seemed to hurt the feelings of the

elephants and their ladies ; I never should have expected them to be so touchy.

Nothing can be simpler or more ingenious than the sort of elephant's ball which helps to catch whole herds of these animals in the forests. A certain number of tame elephants are set at liberty ; each gentleman gallops off into the thick woods and jungles, and invites several wild ladies to dance with him, who follow him with delight ; each liberated lady does the same, and brings back a considerable number of dauntless and eager partners. They all return at a wild gallop into an enclosure of which the paling is made of impenetrable trunks of teak wood, and to which the clever decoys have led the way ; hardy Siamese men then throw lassos between the legs of the wild elephants, and fasten them by strong ropes to the great trees. Taken in the fatal trap of betrayed affections, the unhappy beasts are put upon a strict diet, till enfeebled, powerless, and faint from hunger, they submit to a yoke of which food is the reward, and at the end of a year the savage monster of the woods blindly obeys a driver of twelve years old.

But while we lingered in these singular stables, night fell, and a glorious moon arose. We returned to the Mission by land, and left the royal town at the pagoda of " Buddha's foot." Beneath the blue haze, and in the silence of night, a wonderful effect was produced by spires three hundred feet high, feebly lighted up, but throwing deep shadows, white towers, sparkling columns, antediluvian animals cut in marble, porcelain kiosques

amidst consecrated lakes, and cupolas that seemed as though covered with a sheet of silver; our echoing steps resounded through the deserted lanes; we are not surrounded by tombs but by treasures, and unknown treasures.

Presently, still led by Père Larnaudie, we turned down gigantic avenues of sycamores, palms and tulip trees, we passed castellated porticos, and near the outskirts we fell upon some abominably dirty lanes, where the people grovelled in mud and filth amidst hundreds of mangy, yelping curs. This is, indeed, another side of the East! In the distance the town appears like a fairy picture, without a single stain; you land amidst the palaces, which you leave enchanted with the glories of gold and silver, lacker, and mirrors, to sink into the mire of disgusting holes, where wandering cattle, and beggars covered with elephantiasis meet amidst filthy smells, and the poisonous pools of the ebbing tide. At last we returned to our hut built on piles—a well-directed kick would upset the tottering building; night lizards run along the worm-eaten floor, thick clouds of mosquitoes worry me so much that it is impossible to sleep, and I am writing to you on the mat which will be my bed, and shall do so as long as my allowance of cocoa-nut oil feeds the flickering wick of cotton, which this morning was plucked from the tree. But it quivers as a sign that it is going out, and as I have been pursued all day with the recollection of the catechumens' delightful Latin, I will wind up by giving you the last trait of our simple-minded friends;

they asked us what had become of the Prince's nurse: "*Quia mercatores albi narrant se vidisse Principem gallicum descendente de Chow-Phya cum nutrice ejus,*" according to which the fifty or sixty European merchants in Siam believe that the Duc de Penthievre, a lieutenant in the navy, journeys round the world with his nurse and lands with her! The poor old lady of the 'Chow-Phya' is the involuntary cause of this delicious story, at which no doubt all the white residents laugh by the hour! You can imagine how heartily we laughed, too, at the idea which they have taken up of our mode of travelling. From having been foster-fathers this morning, this evening we become foster-children.

12th January.—While the Cabinet is discussing whether we shall cause the overthrow of the great kingdom, we flit gaily from bank to bank of the Menam, attracted by what most dazzles our eyes. And these are the pagodas. I have heard those in China boasted of, but I can hardly believe that there can be any temples in the whole of Asia which can equal those of Bangkok.¹

The grandest and most characteristic pagoda is on the right bank, surrounded by a fine and verdant wood. It rises amidst a cluster of small towers which command a central pyramid three hundred feet high. This is at

¹ I have since been to Canton, Shanghai, and Peking, and I am quite convinced that the finest pagodas of these towns are as inferior to the least in the kingdom of Siam as Quimperlé is to Paris.

the base in the form of the lower part of a cone, with one hundred and fifty steps; then it becomes a six-sided tower, with dormer windows supported by three white elephant's trunks; the graceful spire then rises from a nest of turrets, and shoots upwards like a single column rounded off into a cupola at the summit; from thence a bronze gilt arrow extends twenty crooked arms that pierce the clouds. When lighted up by the rays of the sun it all becomes one mass of brilliancy; the enamelled colours of flaming earthenware, the coating of thousands of polished roses standing out on the alabaster, give to this pagoda with its pure and brilliant architecture, which is unknown under any other sky, the magical effect of a dream, with the colossal signs of reality.

As we approached it, gliding slowly along in a gondola against the impetuous current of the river, the promontory looked like an entire town, a sacred town of irregular towers, crowded kiosques, painted summer-houses, colonnades, Italian terraces, and statues of pink marble and red porphyry. But on landing we had to pass the ditches and shallows which surround the sacred ramparts, where walking with measured steps was a whole population of men, with heads and eyebrows shaved, and whose dress was a long saffron-coloured Roman toga. These were the "talapoins," or Buddhist priests. In one hand they hold an iron saucepan, and in the other the "talapat," a great fan of palm-leaves, the distinguishing sign of their rank. The lanes they live in are horribly dirty, and their houses

are huts built of dirty planks and bricks, which are falling to pieces. One could imagine them to be the foul drains of the porcelain palaces which touch them, luckily hidden by bowers of luxuriant trees. It is certainly very true that—

“Ce qu'on voit aux abords d'une grande cité
Ce sont ses abattoirs, ses murs, ses cimetières.”

More than seven hundred talapoins or “phras” looked at us as we passed, with an indifference that bordered on contempt. And when we saw the sleepy and besotted priests of Buddha, who looked like lazy beggars, and the twelve or fifteen hundred ragged urchins who surrounded them in the capacity of choristers, and who grow up in the slums, together with groups of geese, pigs, chickens, and stray dogs, it seemed a menagerie of mud, dirt, and vermin belonging to the monastery, and we could not help noticing the remarkable contrast which exists between the fairy-like appearance of the temple as seen from the town, and the horrible condition of the hundreds of priests which serve it.

This morning, while crossing the floating town, we saw a great number of bonzes. As soon as daylight appears, they start, two and two, in a boat, and stopping a moment before each shop that is washed by the stream they beg for food. More than ten thousand of them go their rounds every morning. As soon as they appear, the women prostrate themselves with folded hands, bowing three times, and touching the boat with their foreheads, and empty into the saucepan a spoonful of rice, boiled fish, cakes, and fruit. As soon as the

saucepan is brimful they return to the temple, and breakfast amply in the early morning; for, by an old law, the mendicants are forbidden to touch any kind of food from mid-day till mid-night. What a check that would be at home, if it were applied to those who take advantage of begging letters.

But this revered caste of the Siamese is subjected to the strictest code of temperance, superstition, and indolence. Père Larnaudie quoted a few examples. "Never eat meat, not even the flesh of crocodiles or dogs; never drink wine."

"Never till the ground, for you might kill a worm or an ant."

"Live by alms, never by the work of your hands."

"Never cook rice, for in it there is a germ of life."

(Instead of it, however, they ring all the bells when they rise, that the women in the town may light their ovens, and in the character of pious cooks, prepare them plentiful dishes.)

"Do not travel on mares, or female elephants."

"If during sleep you dream of a young girl, it is a serious fault, greatly displeasing to Buddha, and for which you must do public penance."

In short, never to sit, except on a seat twelve inches high, to fly from women unless they give food, to avoid laymen, to respect the lives of animals, to bewail the uncertainty of human things, and to make public confession of sin, is all that is required by their precepts, which are a singular medley of pure morality, Christian principles, and feeble jugglery, to which if they conform

in the slightest degree, they live respectably enough. But this dreamy life, and enforced idleness, behind which the most hideous vices are concealed, is the cause of their fishy-looking eyes, their insolent appearance, and their grasping covetousness.

It would seem that all young men of family enter the order at about twenty years of age: it is a sort of necessary polish. At the end of a few years they can easily leave; and instead of passing the very water they drink many times through a cloth, for fear of swallowing some animalculæ containing the soul of an ancestor, they squander their patrimony in games and feasting.

Then the *sine quâ non* condition of being raised to the throne is, besides blood relationship, to have been a talapoin. Thus the present king has passed with no intervening state from this holy celibacy to the intoxicating delights of a harem of eight hundred wives.

Finally, the lanes inhabited by the talapoins are considered as an asylum for animals. A crowd of women come and let loose offerings of chickens, ducks, peacocks and turkeys. And it seems that these worthy talapoins twist their necks very skilfully, and enjoy them in select little parties!

You have got some idea of the Siamese bonzes,—now for their temple, and their god. We only had to go up a few steps, to pass from the dirty huts to marble terraces. We scaled the great pyramid as high as we could go; no such easy matter beneath a scorching sun which took away our strength, and blinded by the dazzling whiteness of the stone-work. But a panorama

of the whole town was now laid before us, with the windings of the river, the royal palaces, the eleven pagodas in the first enclosure, the two-and-twenty in the second, and some four hundred porcelain towers and spires, looking as though planted in a mound of verdure, formed by the masses of tropical vegetation.

In the symmetrical colonnades which we visited, there are hundreds of altars, decorated with millions of statuettes of Buddha, in gold, silver, copper, or porphyry. On the left side is a very large temple, with a five-storied roof, in blue, green, and yellow tiles, and dazzling walls. A double door of gigantic size, all lacker work, inlaid with mother-o'-pearl, opened to us and we were in the presence of a Buddha of coloured stone-work. He was seated on a stool nearly fifty feet high, his legs crossed, a pointed crown upon his head, great white eyes, and his height was nearly forty feet. This deified mass, altogether attaining to the height of ninety feet, is the only thing that remains unmoved at the sound of more than fifty gongs and tom-toms, which the bonzes beat with all their strength. Incense burns in bronze cups, and a ray of light penetrating the window strikes upon five rows of gilded statuettes which, in a body of two or three hundred, crouch at the feet of the great god, and baskets of splendid fruit are offered to them; you can imagine who eats it. Suits of armour are fixed against the walls, and at certain distances the seven-storied umbrella hangs like a banner. As for the bas-reliefs, their description would take a whole volume; they represent all the tortures of

the Buddhist hell. I shuddered as I looked on the tortures of these wretched creatures; some fainting away, thrusting out their tongues which serpents devoured, or picking up an eye torn out by the claw of an eagle, twisting round like teetotums, or eagerly devouring human brains in the split skull of their neighbour.

On one side there are sculptures, on the other coloured frescoes on walls ninety feet long. The illustrations extend into a whole world of detail of the Buddhist religion, which varies in every part of Asia, and is so impossible to separate from tradition, and so contradictory in its laws.

Heaven forbid that I should attempt to give you any idea of what I can understand of Buddhism! Notwithstanding my desire for instruction, I am already suffering from indigestion from all these extraordinary old stories, which can only be interesting when one knows the language of the country, and can then question the native bonzes. What does it signify that Buddha, after passing through thirty-six thousand trans-migrations, arrived at the height of holiness and science, and became the great doctor of the universe, after having been a serpent, the king of the white elephants, a stork, a tortoise, a monkey, a sparrow, and an ox, ready to be made into roast beef for the Siamese! A man on earth, a demon in hell, an angel in the ten stages of the heavens, and half demon half angel, in the intermediate zone between heaven and hell, "Thea Rodon," or "Somana Rodo," who becomes "Velsadon,"

is far too complicated for me to follow through the "Toxaxats," and "Mahaxat," which are romances worthy to fill twenty years of 'Le Petit Journal.'

But out of all that was told me in this hyperbolic maze, mixed with caricatured features of the purest of our beliefs, here is one charming legend. An Indian prince who adored a young Himalayan girl, was forced to wait throughout a war of ten years' duration, in which he saved his country by marvellous efforts of courage, before he could espouse her who loved him. The very night of the wedding he died, struck by lightning; after passing a year of fearful suffering in purgatory, he at last flew to the door opening upon the heaven where eternal felicity awaited him. "Can I return but for one hour to the earth, that I may look upon her whom I have so loved?" he cried to the angel who guarded the heavens. "Thou canst, faithful heart, but that hour will cost thee ten thousand years of the tortures from which thy limbs writhe still." Without a moment's hesitation he flew down to earth, and intoxicated with joy sought amongst the shady avenues of the Valley of Cashmere for the long-loved spot connected with such tender recollection. The young girl was there, indeed, but clasped in another's arms, and with heavenly voice vowing eternal constancy! When he returned to Purgatory, "Rise at once to heaven," said the angel to him, "what thou has just seen, is more terrible to thee than ten thousand years of suffering, flames, and gnashing of teeth."

Such tender words contrast strangely with the colossal

Buddha before our eyes. But its gigantic proportions are more imposing in the eyes of the people of the East. When we left the right bank, it was to follow the avenues leading along the left bank to another pagoda, that of Xetuphon. I will only just mention the troops of marble monsters encrusted with coloured crystals, and representing women seated on herculean cocks, three headed elephants, winged crocodiles, and tigers finishing off with a serpent's tail; but I wish you really to imagine yourself with us beneath a colonnade of teak wood, and in a great sanctuary where the god is extended his full length, and that is no small matter, for he measured one hundred and fifty feet from the shoulder to the sole of the foot. This enormous body which is of stone-work, is completely and entirely gilt. It lies on the right side, and a gilded terrace ornamented with sculpture, serves for a couch. The head, of which the summit is eighty feet above the ground, is supported by the right hand, which points towards the entrance door. The left hand is extended along the thigh; the eyes are of silver, the lips pink enamel, and on the head is a crown of red gold. We looked like Lilliputians surrounding Gulliver, and when we tried to climb up upon him we entirely disappeared in his nostrils; one of his nails is taller than any one of us. We stood amazed before this Titanic work, of which the architecture can only have been paid for by the treasures of a Cræsus. No creed ever saw such a display of wealth, for all this enormous coating of the purest gold must be worth thousands of millions; each

sheet of metal, and there are thousands, is nearly two square feet in size, and they say weighs 450 ounces of gold. If ever a vizier Ozman comes here with a mania for scratching the ground of old Siam, what valuable dust will fall from his palm! I cannot describe to you the stateliness of this temple, where the divinity overwhelms us with his size and his gold; a semi-obscurity caused by the ancient windows which are half-covered, only admits a few inquisitive rays to play on the couch which sparkles with the precious metal, and seems like a sign of the supernatural world; there is something mysterious in these twilight shades, which enlarge the columns of teak wood, and make the ceilings which are covered with mosaics of many-coloured crystals look like a firmament dotted with brilliant stars. I owe this admiration to a heathen temple that has a look of grandeur unique in the world, but while it is undoubtedly beautiful, it does not appeal to the soul.

Our visits to the temples made us wish very much that we might carry away some of the fascinating little statues which would remind us of the great ones. So we sent for the mandarin who makes them, to come to the floating villa belonging to the general in command to beg him to sell some idols to us. "No, no, never!" he replied with emphasis, though crouching at our feet. We reasoned with him as well as we could, but he said, "that his religion forbids anything to be sold to the Gentiles, and if the king knew of it he would cut off his hand and his ears, but that still he might be able to *exchange* some statuettes for a certain sum of

money." This is very oriental! But soon he corrected himself, and enveloping himself in his virtue, he refused with renewed energy.

So we set off and went to the Annamites' camp. It seems that they have a speciality for getting hold of the idols. But here again we arrived too late. They had brought a magnificent collection to their chief, but hearing that the mandarins were about to make him a domiciliary visit (an agreeable institution which has been imported here), they threw the whole bundle into the river.

We devoted the middle of the day partly to the floating city, partly to the bazaars on dry land. Being received on the rafts with amiable smiles, we bought the skins and claws of tigers, serpent skins, tom-toms, and perfumes. Very often the canal was barred by a great bridge of boats, where was being sold the pink paste which is eaten night and day by the Siamese. In these itinerant tubs there is a mixture of betel nut, arac, tobacco, and lime. The paste, which is a pale pink colour, becomes scarlet when it is chewed, gradually intoxicates, and turns the teeth black as ink. They consider this a beauty, and there is a story that lately the king invited to his harem two sisters of the order of St. Vincent de Paul, and a handsome American, the wife of a naval captain, who was discreetly left at the door. When he returned the latter to her husband "What a fine woman," said he to him, "how pretty she is; but what a pity that she should be so disfigured with white teeth!"

We landed amidst heaps of "kapi." This is composed of shrimps' spawn, left to ferment in wooden tubs full of brine, till it is rotten; the people then crush it beneath their feet while dancing in a ring, and the result is a disgusting violet coloured jelly; and this is the delight of the Siamese! Turning into this bazaar, which is a long paved lane, covered with matting, we saw, in the midst of a wonderful rabble, all the produce destined for Siamese cookery. After food for the mind, here we found food for the body. To begin with, rice is the Alpha and Omega. Fish, also, have a considerable part to play. In thousands of stalls placed side by side we saw pools full of young sharks, soles, eels whose bite is very severe, sunfish, a kind of skate which fastens on to the hulls of ships, and makes a sort of deep cooing noise, and finally, various pieces of boa-constrictors. Père Larnaudie, who has tasted it, declares this dish to be delicious. The fish are brought in boat reservoirs, and live in the ponds till they are sold. But, according to the belief in the metempsychosis, a Siamese customer would consider himself guilty of criminal cruelty if he killed them by running a knife into their gills, so they only *let them die*, by exposing them to the air!

Further on was the vegetable and fruit market. There were mountains of lotus, Indian potatoe, ground nuts, sago, custard apples, excellent leit-chees, and stinking doryans. The smell of these last fruits which has a most powerful effect upon the olfactory nerves, is not to be described; it fills you with horror. But

the moment you have braved one bite into this melon, the delicacy and flavour of the fruit triumphs over the first disgust, and you ask for more. I remember that we never saw them on the tables of the bungalows at Singapore, but we often caught the European residents hidden in the arbours in their gardens that they might eat them. As to the arbours, they alas! kept the fatal smell. But the oddest thing was to be in the middle of this bazaar. Chinamen selling little books about the fête at Saint Cloud, Paris goods, and mechanical dolls! Close by a restaurant made of stretched matting, where we heard the sound of the "kapi" eaters' chopsticks, we were fortunate enough to discover some charming productions of native talent—games in boxes of enamelled copper, bracelets and armlets of red gold, filigree necklaces enriched with uncut rubies and sapphires; in short, things enough upon which to spend wild sums, if one were only as rich as a Siamese!

Indeed, the public wealth is enormous; there is more gold and silver in circulation here than in any other spot in the world. All we have already seen proved that to us, but the gambling-houses which are at the further end of the bazaar will show it still more; so we go in. Some sixty people, men and women, are sitting in a circle on the polished floor of the bamboo hut. Each one puts down his stake of one, two, or three handfuls of silver balls. A very strange money it is! Imagine a row of twelve little silver pills, of which the biggest is the size of a nut,

and the smallest the size of a pin's head. Such is the graduated scale of King Mongkut's coin. Each ball has a little notch cut at the back, and is marked in front by a stamp in the form of a tiny heart. The one most used is the "tical;" it is the size of a very small nut, and worth half-a-crown; the largest is worth ten shillings. It was a most original sight to see the scarlet mat, on which a perfect hailstorm of these silver balls was falling, thrown by perfectly impassive hands. Sitting down was a venerable old croupier, on whom the looks of the whole dumb audience concentrated, who twenty times a minute threw down a handful of dice, which were nothing but African shells, and declared them to be even or odd as it happened. "Passe et manque" or "moitié à la boulette" are terms not yet used in the great kingdom. But our consuls could introduce that easier than a commercial treaty. When I saw silk-robed mandarins losing successively thousands of silver balls, I at first imagined that these great officials were the only players at these singular tables. But the whole people are essentially gamblers. A few paces off, small shop-keepers were playing with China money, little counters with a number stamped in relief; in other tents, pitched beneath the shade of magnificent cocoa-nut trees, but made of ragged bits of mat, of a curious shape only to be seen in the East, slaves were gambling away the money which is used by the poor, little shells called "Venus shells," of which one thousand are worth sixpence. What a picture Decamps would have made of

these gambling places! To the right resplendent Mandarins lying carelessly on silken couches, and throwing down handfuls of money, as a sower sows his seed; to the left, greedy and excited shopkeepers sell their last bales of goods at half price, to be able to risk the odd and even. In the distance, almost in the wood, in a framework of verdure, gilded by the sunshine, are groups of breathless young girls, slaves who have only escaped during the last hour, half-dressed when they come, and frequently deprived of all clothing before they go. Leaning upon hands and knees with bent back, and head and neck convulsively thrust forward, they balance their small nervous feet in the air, and their lithe and well moulded forms set off by this constrained position, shudder all over at each throw of the dice. Who knows? The purchase of their liberty depends upon a lucky chance, and one hour's frolic may ensure the freedom of a whole life!

We returned to the Mission over a large square of turf, joining the palace of the second king, who died last year; in the midst of it rises a curious and gigantic erection which is being built for the deceased, a perfect artificial mountain, crowned with graceful kiosques; two months later and the whole thing will be burnt, together with the corpse of the king, placed at the summit. This magnificent entertainment will cost about half a million. For a week there will be rejoicing throughout all Siam; elephants armed for war will line the way, and the guns will roar from the height of the huge living masses. The first king

will throw thousands of bouquets of flowers to the people, into the heart of which will be fastened silver "ticals;" games and feasts, incense and processions, dances and pantomimes, all will be called into use for the funeral solemnity, which is thus converted into a public rejoicing.

What we can already see of it is quite worthy of admiration. You must understand that this mountain of artificial rocks is supported by a framework of teak wood, more than 170 feet in height. The finest forest trees from the interior of the kingdom have been dragged as far as this by thousands of coolies. We got in by a hole that is hidden in the centre of the building, and we were struck with the extreme slightness of the whole work. What labour, what blows both of courbache and hatchet, what sweat and suffering, must have been required to produce results destined only to become a prey to the flames.

The many-storied roof of the highest kiosk is not yet finished; in it will be placed the body of the deceased and combustible king. We saw them put on the last sheets of gilding on this small portion of the great whole, and already 145 ounces of pure gold have been employed in this one detail of the immense edifice. The process of rolling out metal being still in a state of infancy here, the sheets of the precious substance are so thick that out of one we should make fifty.

A square glittering balcony surrounds the centre kiosk; eight gilded kiosques, arranged like the

eight points of a star, and built on the tops of artificial rocks, form the dazzling and picturesque surrounding to the mausoleum; eighteen five-storied umbrellas¹ are planted as sentinels round the now empty catafalque, and the scarlet flag with the white elephant floats above the whole group, which is in the highest degree pleasing to the eye.

As to the mountain itself, which is made of cardboard, a water-colour drawing is the only thing that could give you a notion of the bronze and metallic and changing hues of the rounded excrescences, the overhanging rocks, and the misty caves. This construction of papier-mâché, of which the rocks alone rise to a height of nearly 125 feet, is in some parts covered with leaves made of red copper, in another part with gold leaves, higher up leaves of antimony from Borneo, lower down of platina; they are all embossed and sparkling, relieved by artificial bouquets of metal, and vases of mother-o'-pearl, of which only the outline is seen. A winding path, sometimes a slope, sometimes in steps, twists five times round the hill before you get to the top; at each step it is guarded by China dogs, gilded dragons, and glass peacocks. Such are the most striking ornaments of this fairy-like erection. You can imagine how the rays of sunshine dart their many fires on these metallic rocks, which act as a heap of reflectors, from which they strike back, and, uniting, increase their changed and

¹ The arms of king No. 2 have an umbrella with two stories less than those of king No. 1.

dazzling light a thousand times. On the ground floor, to the right, a carved ebony barrier, enriched with ivory, marks the threshold of the harem of the deceased. A sparkling gable, bronze buttresses, green, blue, and yellow tiles, enrich the first kiosque, which is only a roof supported by four columns of teak wood; then a grating, like those in our tennis-courts, but made of sandal wood, shows the balcony from whence the 700 widows of one husband can see the gradual growth of the magnificent tomb in which he is to be roasted.

But the decorations are not yet complete, thousands of carpenters are employed at the entrance, thrusting into the ground the trunks of immense teak trees, at the top of which will be placed gilt animals. In the long sheds we saw the mandarin carpenters directing the works, and fastening on bands of gold on the huge bodies of flying dragons, winged crocodiles, and antediluvian birds. When these avenues of May-poles, supporting a whole menagerie of fabulous animals, surround this building, which looks like a theatrical necropolis; when thousands of Siamese in holiday dress surround the golden mountain; when the clouds of smoke from the cannon during the day, and the numerous fireworks and Bengal lights at night, enliven this startling scene, I think we may say that this royal funeral will be one of the grandest of Asiatic sights.

While speaking of all these scenes which were so new to us, we glided down the majestic Me-Nam in our gondola. The great trees in the gardens sur-

rounding the pagodas were lighted up by the glimmer of the fireflies which covered all the dim dark shadows with a gentle rain of sparks; and the outlines of the canals in the floating city were marked by Venetian lanterns of various colours which were reflected in the mirrors of the tranquil waters.

January 13th, 1867.—About eleven o'clock this morning, during a fearful heat, as we came back from mass to our bamboo hut, thinking of all the courageous missionaries who since Saint François Xavier in 1562 have landed on this quay, and there gathered fresh strength before commencing in the unwholesome forests of the interior their life of self-denial, suffering, solitude, and duty, we saw a breathless mandarin coming along, who proved to be the King's Chamberlain. He presented us with a paper two feet long, and two inches broad, in which four lines containing fifty or sixty words each, written in Siamese, proved quite unintelligible to us. It was the royal reply. But did it contain our passport, or our letters of introduction? We applied to Père Larnaudie, and great was our surprise to discover that his Siamese Majesty had been expecting us since eight o'clock in the morning. The king was evidently surprised not to see us arrive; but it was the fault of his Grand Master, who must have been running after some damsel escaped from his seraglio, and so have played truant. We quickly jumped into a gondola, reinforcing our party by the generalissimo,

who wears the uniform of a French General of Division, with only the difference of having an elephant embroidered on the collar; but when we arrived at the gate of the royal entrance we were informed that his Majesty had left the audience chamber where he discusses each morning with the busy mandarins the pressing wants of the State, and that he was shut up in his harem where no one might cross the threshold to fetch him on pain of death.

Thanks to our guides, having entered the first court of the palace, we made use of the opportunity to examine into what it contained.

There being no longer any thought of a royal audience and its etiquette, we thankfully took off our cloth coats in which we were dying of heat, and walked about the colonnades and terraces in our shirt-sleeves, like the people from Paris who visit the fortifications on a summer's day. One of the king's pages, dressed in a small helmet and a blue cashmere scarf, bowed politely before us, prostrating himself frequently to the ground. Every time he spoke, he put away his perfumed cigarette behind his ear. From him we obtained permission to pay our respects to the great living idol, the white elephant.

At the threshold of this half stable, half temple, some dozen mandarins, who accompanied us, prostrated themselves on all fours in the presence of the animal god, and, out of respect for the proprieties, we went hat in hand into this sanctuary with extremely respectful bows. And there we saw that famous white

divinity, which is the emblem of the kingdom of Siam, and before which a whole people bow. But how great was our disappointment at finding the white elephant to be the same colour as all other elephants in the world. To make up for it, he was covered with gold bracelets and necklaces, amulets and precious stones. His meals are served on enormous plates of gold, beautifully chased, and the water which is meant for him is kept in splendid silver vases. But on going closer to this animal covered with relics, we could perceive that its skin is rather more grey, and that there is a whiter hue over it than amongst the ordinary run of elephants; but it is solely in consequence of the eyes, which are perfectly white, that he is destined to so much honour, and such servile adoration. In that respect the god is an Albino, a very rare quality.

According to what we are told, as soon as the chiefs up the country discover an animal thus marked, they collect all the neighbouring tribes to trap him; thanks to considerable stratagem, he is caught, and, after this gentle violence, which certainly costs some hundreds of broken arms and legs, he is taken to Bangkok on a boat magnificently decorated, when he is waited on by a troop of slaves prostrated at his feet. In payment of the fruits and green corn which they offer to him, these poor wretches, it seems, get nothing but violent blows whenever they come within reach of his trunk. But it matters not that the god strikes, and scatters blows and death around him. The man-

darins from Bangkok, enstalled in royal boats, go up the river before him, and offer him the finest gifts; for their religion teaches them that the souls of Buddhas transmigrate into the bodies of white birds, white monkeys, and white elephants; and to the latter extra respect and veneration is due, owing to the enormous number of cubic yards of divinity which they contain.

As for us, notwithstanding convulsions of laughter, we did not refuse to pay the proper respect due to the elephant; it was the best thing we could do for our Siamese hosts. The beast itself, delighted with the bundles of young grass which we offered him on his golden dishes, stamped and swayed about with the three legs that were left free. The fourth is held by a riveted chain, without which I suspect that the living idol would very quickly get away from this spot, where it lives amidst other odours besides that of sanctity, to return to the jungle amongst the profane but deeply regretted companions of its nomadic life. We remained more than half-an-hour in this sanctuary, examining the decorations meant for great ceremonies, which are hung up like harness on the marble walls. There is a gilt kiosque with little bells stuck upon a stool, trappings, and ear-rings, precious stones, and some hundreds of rings for his tusks, which, added to what he already wears, must make a wonderful addition to his godlike appearance. For we must remember that we only see the elephant in his careless morning dress—think what he must be when got up for the evening!

But we would not leave the temple without winning a bet which had been made in Europe, and which we used laughingly to call to mind on the great waves by the Cape of Good Hope, and at the balls in Sydney, "to bring back, each of us, three hairs of the white elephant." But this pious depilatory operation looked like a very dangerous joke now that we found ourselves face to trunk with the animal. To bribe with a few pieces of money his valet—who followed him respectfully, walking on his knees, and with nine sharp twitches pulled them out of his lower lip—took a much shorter time to do than to write about, and I shall bring back to you these capillary relics in a locket which till now has had no use.

There was nothing more to be seen in the series of colonnades than sentries mounting guard; and the considerably increased crowd of attendants, mandarins, and royal chamberlains advised us to try our fortune with his Majesty about five o'clock, and see whether he would receive us when he left his harem.

We then directed our steps towards a pagoda which, I think, they told us was called the Tower of Babel, but it looked to me like something between an oven and a dead-house. After going through four gates and following paved avenues filled with talapoins coming and going, we found ourselves before a kiosque of open stonework, and with the columns blackened with smoke. This is the chief place of burial in Bangkok, and, after waiting an hour and a half, we witnessed a middle-class funeral. As mourning here,

unlike European, is white, so death produces a very different impression with these people to what it does with us, and all the relations, friends, and mates smoke and chat, joke and laugh while following the procession. You know that here, and in the Indies, they do not bury the corpses, but burn them. Although it may be true that our poor mortal remains are thus more decently destroyed than by gnawing worms and decay, and though burning may be a perfect answer to the question of the unwholesomeness of cemeteries, still I must confess that few sights can be as horrible to the living, or make an impression on the mind more calculated to return on sleepless nights like some terrible nightmare.

We stood some twenty yards off, so as not to interfere with local superstitions, and this is what we saw. The body, wrapped in white linen, was taken from the coffin and placed in the kiosque on three rows of dry fagots. The "Chao-klein-balat," or chief priest of the talapoints, lighted the funeral pile; the flames arose, and its light added to the first cloud of thick smoke hid all from our eyes; gradually the flames ceased, the smoke disappeared, but the fire continued; then the corpse was seen at the summit, and the flesh crackled horribly amidst the reverent silence of the spectators. But as death had only taken place the night before, the nerves and muscles quivered beneath the roasting fire; the arms worked, the joints moved, the legs contracted and pushed against the fire. If it were not a recognised fact in physical science that a dead cat

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placed over a fire jumps about like a live frog, we should have thought that the unhappy man had awoke to life. And I must confess that the corpse, rising and throwing about its limbs in convulsive efforts, and seeming to faint away under the agony of the scorching fire, curdled the blood in my veins. Oh! no, I will not die here.

But this was a very commonplace funeral. It seems that a Siamese frequently says on his deathbed, "I leave an arm or a leg to the birds." Then the officiating talapoin cuts up the corpse, and throws the desired morsel to the winged customers, hideous vultures, who fly by hundreds above the pagoda, waiting for their prey. So while the body roasts over the fire, one of the raw limbs is devoured a hundred paces off in the "charnel house."

We went there, and the sight of this funeral annex, while more peaceful than the funeral pile, is certainly more impressive. It is a curious contradiction, that while these good Siamese believe themselves to be performing a pious act in giving one of their limbs to the birds, it is the most humiliating of stigmas to be entirely devoured by vultures. The king's galley-slaves are refused by Buddha the honour of being burnt over a fire. The moment we set foot in the dead-house, we stumbled over heaps of old skulls, stripped and despoiled by the beaks of the avenging race; and on all sides there were fragments still fresh and bleeding, and loathsome, round which the disgusting birds were established, grasping them with beak and claws,

and flapping their wings to give them more force in tearing away the flesh, and also to keep away any competitors for the prey. Notwithstanding the intense heat, the smell is not so strong as you might imagine, owing to the rapidity with which the work is done. But there is always the disgusting odour exhaled by the vultures themselves. Then they sleep by hundreds in the same place where they eat, and are to be seen on the cornices of the colonnades. The talapoins, after having taken us about amongst the mangled corpses and scattered limbs of the charnel-house, were kind enough to show us the larder where lay a galley-slave who died yesterday, covered only with a single plank, and designed for the morrow's breakfast. The poor devil still had chains on his legs, which will rather inconvenience the vultures.

Returning in front of the fire, we hoped to see the end of the ceremony, but the embers were still too hot. In a few hours they will take from the midst of the cinders the tical which was placed in the mouth of the corpse at the moment when the relations took him from the house of death, and carried him three times round the garden, so that "he might not find his way back again." The centre part of the cinders will then be collected in little urns, and each member of the family will carry away in his pocket a small portion of the deceased. Now I can understand the rows of little pots, like jam-pots, which I saw on the shelves which surround the altars of the household gods in the ante-rooms of each house. I

am no longer surprised at a story which I used to think a made up one, according to which, at the burning of a celebrated warrior, the talapoins threw themselves on the roasted liver that they might eat it; and I can almost hear the old Siamese Ambassador at Paris talking something resembling French, and asking a friend to the ceremony of interment of one of his relations, saying, "Pray come to-morrow punctually at eleven to see my uncle broiled."

But all this time we did not forget our engagement for eight o'clock this morning, which was postponed by the carelessness of a mandarin till five in the evening. The square in front of the palace was filled with royal troops who, bare-footed but well-drilled, were perfectly able to follow the word of command given in French by the General. Forming square, charging with bayonets, filing off, and saluting, accompanied with inspiring music, all this was uncommonly successful considering they were Asiatics. Three cheers for Field-marshal Lamache.

This time the gate of the second enclosure opened its folding-doors to us; there are cannon on the terrace, and armed sentinels on each porcelain step of the winding stair. We arrived at the threshold of the throne-room, and the King came to meet the Prince amidst a crowd of mandarins crouched down in attitudes of profound respect, not daring even to lift their eyes to the master whom they worship.

His Majesty was preceded by a dozen of his children, who really are charming; their heads are shaved,

except on the crown, whence rises a little plait surrounded by a wreath of white flowers, fastened by sapphire pins; their bare chests are ornamented with various chains of precious stones, and their waists with a belt of some silvered material, from which hangs a scarf of pink and blue China silk; finally, seven or eight large rings, to which are attached pendants of sapphires and rubies, are twisted above the ankle. Such was the appearance of the nice little creatures who had been wreathed and decorated by the sultanas. One carried the king's cigarette box, another his great sword, a third his seven-storied umbrella, and a fourth his golden spittoon. They ran up to us, and greeted us with the softest of smiles.

What a contrast there was between these little Asiatic cherubs and the old king, whose flattened face was set in a gold pointed crown, and whose skeleton limbs trembled beneath gaudy robes and innumerable precious stones. His Siamese majesty, aged sixty-three, is perfectly hideous, and very like a monkey. But King Mongkut piques himself upon talking English, and we understood nearly one word in ten. The conversation was most solemn. The king spoke of Louis XIV. and his famous mission; and still discoursing on the greatness of the "Sun-king," he turned two or three times in a minute to spit his ball of betel-nut into a beautiful golden vase, and then took another out of one of the diamond-mounted boxes held to him by his children. The audience lasted not more than five minutes. We were on the threshold of the

throne-room; the king made us step forward seven or eight paces. I can only compare it to the nave of one of our churches, it is so high and grand. Only being able to measure it with the eye, I should give it about ninety feet long to seven-and-twenty or thirty high. It is a marvellous collection of gilded colonnades, filigree lustres, and eccentric decorations; the floor and ceiling were of brilliant mosaic, and two tiers of galleries were cut in the walls—sort of arched boxes—where the eye was lost amidst masses of gilding. In the middle of the wall that faced us was cut a deep alcove. Wax lights, half a foot in diameter and higher than a man, burnt on the steps of the throne, which is at the far end and looks like an altar. Above rises the seven-storied umbrella, looking like a cathedral spire!

Groups of mandarins prostrated on knees and elbows in every corner, eastern furniture loaded with jewels and decorations, and Buddhas covered with diamonds, besides gifts from European sovereigns, mostly from Paris. A Utrecht velvet arm-chair, with a movable seat—an invalid chair—beneath a splendid silvered dais! The insignia of the Legion of Honour, framed, above a coloured engraving (price one penny) representing some sappers. Blocks of unpolished precious stones lying in plates of the commonest rough earthenware from Auvergne; architecture and wood-work, of a beauty unknown to us, and trinkets from village fairs. This is, indeed, the East, with its medley of beautiful native jewels, and European toys which the ignorant

possessors look upon as works of art, a mixture of grand and mean, gold and tin, of marvellous lacker-work, illustrated with childish pictures. I would give anything to examine the glass cases which surrounded us: the nearest, which made us shriek with laughter, held a heap of beautiful ivory work, jade worth thousands of pounds, bottles of benzine colas, eau de Cologne, and a dozen earthenware vases as big as a melon, with thick edges and strong handles. Some mischievous Frenchman must have sold the king these curious household utensils as a dinner service.

But there was no time left to complete this curious inspection. The king spoke a few words to a group of his daughters, who timidly kept apart till then, and they ran to a liqueur case placed beneath a copy of Jérôme's picture of the reception of the Siamese at Paris. One of them, about thirteen years of age, with nothing but jewels to cover her, a graceful and really charming girl, poured out for us, by the king's order, an abominable decoction under the name of wine. The king was determined upon drinking with us and clinking glasses, and then bowed us out, most amiably desiring his daughters to bring with all pomp three of his visiting cards, which are of glazed paper. His majesty dispensed them with great liberality amongst us, and I enclose this witness to the royal magnificence—

“SOMDITCH-PHRA-PARAMENDR
MAHA MONGKUT,
MAJOR REX SIAMENSIMUM.”

Is not the Latin termination delicious?

Greatly to our delight, the king, in his last words of farewell, told the mandarins to show us to-morrow the offices of the palace, and the abode of his dead colleague. The smiling little princes and numerous mandarins led us back as far as the gate. We looked eagerly round about, but could see neither a shadow in the windows of the harem, nor the least appearance of the famous regiment of Amazons, who we are told form the garrison of the palace.

14th January, 1867.—Fauvel and I began the day by paying a visit to the French Consul, Captain Aubaret, a naval officer, and a very amiable and agreeable man, gifted with the most wonderful facility for learning oriental languages. He related to us all the political variations of the country. After having recognised the protection of Cambodia by the French, the King of Siam signed a secret treaty with the kings of that country, which rendered ours null and void, and they come to Bangkok and secretly pay tribute which they have formally renounced. The English Consul desired nothing better than to encourage the Siamese in this very doubtful proceeding, which stops the progress of our dominion in Cochin-China. "Either we keep Cambodia or I give up," said our intrepid consul. In fact this would strengthen the barrier which we are raising between China and the English Indies, and it would also help our colony to expand more securely, and might possibly prevent our powerful rivals from gradually invading the states of the great king.

It is a curious race between the different European influences in the extreme east. To seize on the first favourable opportunity, so as to prevent any competitor from taking advantage of the next, is the secret of colonial dominion—not a highly moral one, certainly, but almost imperative. To behave sometimes with protecting condescension, sometimes with exasperating superciliousness, to flatter or intimidate, to show the claws, sometimes with, sometimes without the glove; all this we do, with or without reason, to be able to struggle against the cunning dawdling, the perpetually evasive answers, the mean little mysteries, and the glaring breaches of confidence on the part of the petty kings and great moguls of Asia. I really could pity the Siamese cabinet if they were not so deceitful, half knave, half fool. Sometimes they crawl, sometimes they sound a flourish of trumpets, to call attention to their independence. But really this kingdom is a very tempting morsel placed between two neighbours, France and England, who, unable to find any of their neighbours' goods to devour in Europe, have established themselves in Asia.

We have not forgotten the Dupleix, and the La Bourdonnayses, and our luck has been great in conquering so much in Cochin-China after having lost so much in the Indies. But there is nothing astonishing in the fact that while we sincerely respect the integrity of the Siamese kingdom, we demand the same reticence on the part of our rivals. The consequence of this is a very constrained position, and many troubles, which

it being impossible to speak of openly, reflect more strongly on small things; and in the same way that a naughty child is refused its dessert, our consul has taken upon himself, and with good reason, to keep back from the king a magnificent sword, and some other presents sent from France, and they will not be given to him till a certain settlement of frontier boundaries has been arranged according to his demands. The Siamese cabinet settled to-night that they would send an embassy to Paris, to obtain this frontier that they long for. And you may be very sure that the same mail will take a despatch designed to "prepare the ground" just the other way.

But from politics we very soon turned to farce. An open air theatre is the delight of the Siamese, and beneath the shade of a few banana leaves the youthful actors enliven some hundreds of spectators throughout the whole day. Wearing royal gilt crowns, and covered with cuirasses and leggings of brilliant metal, they dance to the sound of the most fearful music, jumping, singing, and fighting, to represent the fabulous episodes of their national history. Notwithstanding the eccentricity of their movements, the thick paint on their faces, and the wonderful leaping of this troupe, we did not stop long before the curious scene, which to Europeans was perfectly unintelligible. Besides, the distant sounds of the royal tom-toms warned us that it was time to go and see the offices of the palace, as the king had yesterday promised us that we should.

A "Thaya," or mandarin, dressed in cherry-coloured

silk, was our cicerone, and led us through a maze of china staircases, variegated towers, four-storied terraces, and grotesque statues of red granite. We entered the king's pagoda. Like all the others, it sparkled with brilliant reflections and glazed tiles; but the first thing that strikes the eye is the pavement of copper bricks, on which the common herd may tread, but at certain distances are silver mats, plaited like coats of mail, and which can alone be trodden on by the king's feet. Frescoes and lustres, columns and incense burners, all are eclipsed by the altar at the end, where some hundreds of Buddhas are collected beneath umbrellas enriched with rubies and diamonds. They looked like so many jets of fireworks thrown up round the great idol, which is the wonder of Siam. This represents a Buddha of human size in massive gold; the head is made of a single emerald, finely sculptured, and of marvellous brilliancy, crowned with a helmet composed of sapphires and opals.

It seems that the English consul offered more than 40,000*l.* in the name of the Government for it, but His Majesty Mongkut holds as much by this head as by his own, and it really must be unique in the world. The annals of the kingdom speak of its discovery having taken place some seven or eight centuries back. "In the event of a revolution," said a European who was in the king's service to me, "I should be quite satisfied to take this statue, while the king was escaping with his eight hundred and seventy-five wives. And by throwing in the two figures four feet high of solid

gold, which are the attendants of the emerald, I should be able to enjoy a very comfortable competence elsewhere." Simple, frank, highly moral, and expressive of good feeling! it would indeed be elsewhere, but it would not be easy to find any country where such confiscation would be considered quite honourable.

While yet in ecstasies over the hitherto unknown riches which were concealed in this pagoda, and of which I only describe these two features, for fear of falling into a catalogue of jewellery, we could not help admiring the simplicity and poverty of these humble talapoins, the guardians of so much magnificence, who walk about barefooted, carrying their iron pots amongst whole regiments of golden gods.

From the pagoda to the mint there is but a step, but the contrast is very great. In the former the gold is pure, and the diamonds of the finest water; in the latter King Mongkut would consider that he failed in his duty as an Asiatic monarch if he did not coin the very basest money. The mandarin master of the mint, adorned like Buddha with a triple allowance of fat, a pale pink scarf, and some twenty rings on fingers and toes, showed us all the ingots and coins. Owing to his knowledge of the art of alloying, the king makes a profit of some thousands of pounds, and it seems that the worthy mandarin himself does not disdain to help out his patrimony at the rate of some 16,000*l.* per annum. But, alas! the silver pill money, king Mongkut's apothecary's system will soon die out. They are now going to coin nothing but flat pieces of money,

with the umbrella stamped on one side and the white elephant on the other. Following the worthy example of the royal bounty, this official, laughing cheerily as he patted his fat stomach with both hands, gave each of us a copper penny (here raised to the imaginary value of fourpence), and a leaden farthing, which was worth one-tenth of a French farthing.

I have as yet hardly mentioned the heat in Siam ; to-day, although we are in the midst of winter, it is so suffocating that we brought our thermometer with us, and the following are the different grades which we observed in the gardens of the pagoda:—The temperature of the air in the shade was 114° and of the ground, also in the shade, 132° . You can imagine what it is when we take ceremonious walks in the heat of the sun in these paved roads.

But it was upon this scorching pavement that we walked when we left the mint; and where do you think we went? To present our respects, at the invitation of "*Primus rex Siamesium,*" to the second king, who died at the beginning of the feast year. Next to witnessing the burning of a Siamese, it is the most curious sight in the kingdom. The said king has been dead nine months; after endless extraordinary ceremonies, it seems that, according to an old and solemn custom,¹ they placed the corpse on an iron-wood throne with a hole in the seat, and by means of a funnel introduced into his throat made him swallow

¹ This was told us by Père Larnaudie, others amongst the missionaries in Siam, and General Lamache.

thirty-eight quarts of mercury. This operation dried him very quickly; the quicksilver more or less mixed was gradually collected in a sculptured bronze vase, placed beneath the throne. Every morning all the chief officers of state came with great pomp to fetch the vase and then emptied it with reverence into the river. When his majesty No. 2 was reduced to the dryness of an old chip, they doubled him in half, drawing his legs up to the forehead, and tying him up like a sausage, they deposited him in a golden urn, at the top of a magnificent catafalque.

And it was this king who had been nine months in bottle that we were to see! Some hundreds of mandarins belonging to his civil and military household walked respectfully about beneath the beautiful colonnades of his palace. We passed through eight gates, the slaves drew back a curtain, and the throne-room appeared before us. The dead king squeezed into his jar on the summit of the altar holds his court exactly as if he lived. They told us to bow before him, which we did to the great satisfaction of the mandarins who lined the walls to right and left, smoking their cigarettes while prostrated with their foreheads to the grounds; they wore white in sign of mourning. One of the pages fetched some large cigars from the catafalque, which they brought us in a basket of red filligree work. They mumbled a few words, which were translated to the effect that, "It is the second king who offers them to us, and that he lights them with one of the mortuary torches." Long ropes

of white and gold extend from the pedestals of the vase, like the threads of a spider's web; at the end of each is a mandarin in adoration. According to their belief these ropes carry their words and prayers to the king, and they press them to their lips with the most intense feeling and belief. A large gold basket is on the first step of the mausoleum, filled with letters and petitions addressed to the deceased within the last week. And the reply is expected! The whole was very strange; what a very original idea it is, to continue the life of a potted king for a whole year, and to surround his mortal remains with all the lively bustle of a court and a smoking-room, to say nothing of keeping up a correspondence with him!

His harem also has been kept for the last nine months for his sole use. At sunrise and sunset his hundreds of wives come and speak through the white cords to this peaceful and most inoffensive husband. In the eyes of the Siamese this is not widowhood; it is conjugal life, only drawn out. They only cease to be his on the day he is placed over the fire, and it is quite an understood thing that the fable of the wives throwing themselves on to the husband's funeral pile will not be carried out.

As for us, we were bewildered and charmed, and made the most polite bows to his Majesty, thanking him for his kind reception and his good cigars, and hoping that he would burn as well as they did!

Two months hence the seals will be taken off; the surviving king will decant the golden bottle in which

his colleague is preserved, and while the bones and skin fall out to burn at the top of the magnificent artificial mountain, which we went to see the day before yesterday, and which is being gilded on all sides, King Mongkut will at once double his seraglio, and lavish dances, feasts, reviews, and illuminations upon his people.

This preserved king, whom we have just returned from visiting, has no successor yet. Till now, there have always been two kings reigning in Siam at the same moment; one did all the work, the other received all the honours. It seems that the most perfect harmony has always united the two monarchs from time immemorial. This is, no doubt, to be attributed less to similarity of ideas and respect for supreme power than to the languid apathy of the Siamese race, and the placid enjoyment of wealth, harems, and ceremonies, which is far more the business of Asiatic kings than any idea of government. If what we are told is true, it is very probable that this twin royalty, which till now has been the foundation of everything, will not be restored. King Mongkut seems decided upon keeping for himself alone all the prestige, wives, and money, and his sole heir will be his eldest son, "Alongkut," whom we saw yesterday.¹ Thus the Siamese kingdom inspired by European customs will be simplified and enriched. We wanted to wait for the splendid fêtes which will celebrate the funeral of the second king

¹ The papers of November, 1868, announce the death of these two princes, at the very moment when their immortal name was forming the basis of the establishment of royal unity.

and the second royalty, but two months would be a long time to stay in a town which has no longer any very great novelty to offer us, and we shall probably see elsewhere many other things more interesting if less curious.

We spent the afternoon in the great public square, amongst an enormous crowd. Talapoints in canary-coloured robes abounded, and it was evident that all the high-life of Bangkok had met together for some solemnity. There were no more cotton langoutis, no more plain rings on the young girls' feet, but long processions of mandarins' wives in scarlet silk scarves, and langoutis of Chinese stuff, which would be envied by our "novelty" seekers in the boulevards. As we were very much astonished at the variety of ages and dresses of these ladies who were winding in and out amongst the crowd, our companions were good enough to explain to us the Siamese customs, from a household point of view.

Each mandarin possesses a harem of twelve, twenty, or thirty wives, according to his caprice and the length of his purse; if he is either Somdet-Chaophaya, Chaophaya, Phaya, Phra, or Luang (which are the five ranks of this aristocracy), it is necessary to distinguish himself from the common people by the quantity and quality of his wives. Amongst them there is only one who is called "great." She is married according to the "kan-mack" or solemn espousals; all the others are called "inferior." Nearly all of them are bought, but I could not find out what was exactly the average price. I saw some very nice

ones who cost from 28*l.* to 32*l.*, so for 50*l.* one ought to be able to get an angelic creature. One very eccentric and inconsistent arrangement is that the chief wife is the one who is commissioned by the husband to make purchases to keep the harem full. She has entire command of the whole lot, takes them out walking, and superintends the cooking, household arrangements, and dress. But then it is also she alone who can inherit, and give birth to the heir of the title and fortune; she alone cannot be sold. As to the others—“*lascivum sed miserabile pecus*”—although their charms, their youth, and their beauty may form the delight of their master, these are still nothing but various pieces of goods; and when a mandarin loses at play, buys more property, or fails in his business, if his purse is empty he pays in wife and children, who become the property of the creditors at a price fixed by law.

But let me forget these revolting customs, which are here accepted with calm simplicity, to put before you in three words a harem taking a stroll. At their head is the chief wife, generally an elderly lady with withered legs, and a white tuft shading her shaven skull. Then come fifteen or twenty of the “inferior” wives, young coquettish and lively women, wearing a scarf across the chest if they have been bought within the last two years; and if the honeymoon is over, with no clothing but gold chains as far as the waist. The queen of the moment, the master’s favourite, is often distinguished by the greater number of her jewels.

A few steps behind follow the attendant slaves, who number about sixty or eighty, carrying coffers, vases, filligree boxes, and baskets of fruit. That, again, is an unhappy race. They form about a fourth part of the population of Siam; they are either prisoners of war, or born in the slave class, and each represents a market value of from 8*l.* to 12*l.* The men till the ground, row, and build houses; the women do the house work, and their children add to the wealth of their patrons. But these are well-known facts, and I only mention them to prove how they are the natural source from whence is derived, by necessary consequence, this immoral system of sale of wives and children by husbands and fathers. Père Larnaudie mistook my gaze of consternation for that of incredulity, and to convince me he showed me, this evening, Monseigneur Pallegoix's book on the kingdom of Thai, or Siam (1854), from which I extract the following translation of a contract of marriage:—

“On Wednesday, in the sixth month, and the twenty-fifth day of the moon, in the year 1211, the first year of the cock, I, Mi, husband, and Kot my wife, deliver, and sell our daughter Ma to Luang-si for eighty ticals (10*l.*), that he may take her into his service instead of money which is due to him. If our daughter Ma runs away from him, let her master take me in her place, and insist on my finding her.”

Paternal love and a sense of decency might prove a check to this inconceivable system of sale, if the rate of interest were not thirty per cent. at Bangkok, in consequence of which the smallest debt scatters a whole family in a few years. I quite see that the abolition of

slavery presents both temporary and material difficulties which require considerable management; but if there are still in the world, as I fear, some who in theory defend slavery, they ought to come here and see into what depths these simple races have been dragged down by this horrible system, against which a perfectly new argument may be found here. If it be permissible for a man to buy and sell a human being who is no way related to him by birth, why should he not be able to sell a child that belongs to him by the rights of paternity, and a wife who has been delivered over to him by a contract of marriage? It is true that the same may be said for the kingdom of Siam that was said for the United States of America: "the slaves do not complain, and their condition is perfectly happy." And I acknowledge that the proverbial gentleness of the Siamese, which allows the laziness of the slaves to harmonize with the listlessness of their masters, delivers this race as much from cares as from joys: when work has no reward, it must lose all energy and strength.

But to return to the public square, where more than twenty-five thousand women of rank and slaves are elbowing one another, and where a dozen of the king's children are careering about on ponies with silver trappings, accompanied by a suite of nobles jogging after them with blue and pink scarfs. Every year, about this time, the king names a "three-days' king" from amongst his favourite mandarins, and there is a sort of carnival. Only a few years ago, this ephemeral

king had the right of taking possession of all the stalls belonging to the shops, and letting his slaves rifle them. And more than that, as if possessed of a fairy ring, he became the proprietor of all the Chinese junks that were unfortunate enough to come into Bangkok during his reign. But now it is nothing more than a great jollification, which costs Somditch-Phra-Paramandromongkut about 800*l.* for banquets and feasts.

In the square where we admired all these eccentric people a great swing is erected, beneath which a furrow has been dug. There the agricultural minister advances, and becoming a gymnast for the time being, swings as far as he can go in the air, so as to call down the blessing of the good genius of harvests upon all the lands of the kingdom. The three-days'-king then takes his place and imitates him, to the great delight of the people, who having been up to this moment a silent and retiring crowd, now as noisy as ever, resume their infernal din, which is assisted by loud cymbals and roaring tom-toms.

We let ourselves be carried along by the crowd, and arrived in front of the palace with its many towers, where the hero of this agricultural carnival gives in his resignation from the steps of the royal balcony. At the same moment all the terraces and galleries of the palace are covered as by an enchanter's wand with the most brilliant dresses; thousands of slaves stand where we are; higher up, groups of mandarins in the most startling colours look like a flock of parrots and cockatoos, and their voices are quite as like as their

feathers! Quite at the top of all, the women belonging to the harem thrust their heads and bare bosoms through the great wooden grating which is the cage of so many captive birds. They lift up the king's little children above their heads, with their state jewels glancing in the sunlight.

To the right is a white tower in which we could see cannon, but such long ones that at first I took them for telescopes. Suddenly the tower was covered with scarlet uniforms. The Amazons were there. A whole body of them came to mount guard, a red schako over one ear, a short yatagan slung over one shoulder, and a bayonet in the belt—I was going to say with “the little finger lightly touching the seam of the trowser,” but instead of that it touched a full langoutis, something between a petticoat and bathing-drawers, coming halfway down the thigh. The steps and top of the tower were soon covered by them, handling their long guns with considerable dexterity, and making a great show of most warlike attitudes; this military corps de ballet caused us much amusement. They hoisted the red standard three times before the white elephant; then the king appeared for a moment on the balcony, and returned hastily to the audience chamber, where it seems that the greatest agitation prevails.

The fact is, that for the last week his Majesty has been composing a letter to the Emperor Napoleon, aided by great nightly counsels, which always end in the letter, written the night before, being put in the fire, and by the concoction of a new message destined

to the same fate on the morrow. And there is no knowing whether, after all this painstaking composition, the unfortunate letter will not in the end be flung straight into the waste paper basket in the Quai d'Orsay!

In the mean time the sun set, and the Amazons, to the accompaniment of a nasal chant, raised an ancient lantern, much carved and ornamented, to the top of a high pole; with it were hoisted two graceful branches of palm, which waved about in the wind. This is, it seems, by way of warning the devil that watch is being kept. Faithful to the old belief, many houses on the river imitate at the same moment the superstitious signal from the great tower.

16th January, 1867.—As for the last three days we have never ceased exploring pagodas, palaces, public places, and the floating town in Bangkok; to-day we thought we would tear ourselves away from this checkerwork of glass and china erections, and take a look at the surrounding country. It is not so picturesque, nor has it such wonderful views as we saw in Java, but it is immensely rich. The overflowing of the Me-Nam, the Nile of this Asiatic Egypt, fertilizes each year with a rich deposit this endless valley of rice plantations, which already furnish a yearly export of about four hundred large vessels, besides providing for the entire kingdom. But the Siamese, happy in their peaceful ease, do not extract a tenth part of what the soil could produce. There are mandarins, and there are slaves, but there are no

merchants; there are peasant market-gardeners, who provide the markets of the nearest villages and towns; but there are no agriculturists. As long as the abundant gold of the mines in the interior, and the established taxations, suffice for the royal treasury, and to keep up the external pomp and glitter of a people who worship their omnipotent king, what motive indeed could move the Siamese to hard work, considering that the king alone would reap the benefit?

A Siamese can live comfortably on two or three pennyworth of rice and one of fish. The result is that labour is almost imaginary in this country, which nature seems to have made more productive in proportion as its inhabitants require less. How many fertile fields and valleys remain still uncultivated, where, without any great trouble, two more rice harvests a year might be gathered! What pools—natural fish-ponds—are to be found, where the tide brings thousands of fish, which are left by the retreating water without any one coming to pick them up! If there were other elements besides this mandarin nobility, who become enervated by the life of the seraglio, and the slaves who do nothing but carry cakes of sweetmeat—if there were here some great object to which to direct the labour, and labourers excited by the love of gain, and no longer by the fear of being beaten—if, in short, this land could produce and export all that Heaven has given it, what a powerful remedy it would be for the miseries of the world! what a provision to set up

against such a famine as that which devastated the Indies and Algeria, and which always threatens China!

There is no doubt that while Siam is, above all, the place which bears the Asiatic stamp unmixed with anything else—while the china spires of the pagodas rise above a people who have never seen anything else,—while it is a collection as strange as it is wealthy of ranks that are worshipped and those that worship,—of brilliant harems and priests in rags,—of gilded Buddhas and miserable huts,—while it is the unadulterated East, at the same time self-contained and magnificent, backward and dignified, there are other discoveries to make than those of the mere tourist; help could be found here for suffering humanity. This door must be opened to try and rouse those who are isolated behind it. Weapons are not needed for this; the Chinese have given an example of a peaceful invasion. The few thousands of them who immigrated to Siam have monopolised all the trade. All that is done in this kingdom is encouraged, arranged, and increased by their hands. In proportion as the Siamese represent indolence, do their restless parasites from the celestial empire form the type of love of gain and perseverance in hard work.

And we ought not to leave these waters to stagnate, which, having been stirred up, might become so fertile. When Siam is united to the great line of the Indies and Japan, whose centre is Singapore; and when a mercantile house, instead of considering a journey to Bangkok in the light of an adventure, only considers

it the first step to a lucrative negotiation, I am sure that figures will prove my first impressions to be correct. I wish from the bottom of my heart that France would, by means of our magnificent "*Messageries Impériales*," try to have the honour of this commercial, peaceful, and lawful conquest; the only one we can hope for, the only one that would give the greater prestige for being quite disinterested on the question of territory, and that would open out a wider field for the trade of all nations.

As far as he was able, Père Larnaudie has showed the Siamese anything that could help them in our modern inventions. As we went in a fast boat through the canals which cut across the middle of the country, we saw before each hut teak-wood mortars, or rude pestles, which naked women were using slowly, to husk very small quantities of rice in the most tedious and primitive manner. But soon we arrived at a mill, which the energetic missionary first built, and then sold; its steam-engines, as you can imagine, do a hundred times the work of the natives. In various branches of industry he has opened out new ways to the simple people, and if a like zeal could be seconded by pecuniary aid, which he cannot furnish, the kingdom would be transformed within ten years.

The worthy father has lived a busy life in this country for twenty-two years, and has made every one love him. He is both botanist and physician, sportsman and mathematician, with the grave sweet voice of a priest, the swarthy complexion and thin figure,

the moustache and military appearance of an African soldier; he has crossed the woods in the interior, preaching everywhere for the instruction of others, and at the same time collecting thousands of precious recollections for himself. It is our delight to hear him talk about his wandering life in the midst of tigérs and hostile people. And it is easy to see that next to Paramendr-Maha-Mongkut, he is King of Bangkok! Before him every creature bows down with a smile of goodwill—a worthy recompense for his sympathising kindness.

Curious experiences have not been wanting in his life of voluntary exile. To begin with, he was the first to take photographs in the town, and you can fancy what a magical effect he produced. Electricity, too, has given him many opportunities to work wonders. One day the talapoins defied him, and before an immense crowd one of them announced that he would invoke his Buddhist genii with such ceremonies as would oblige the "Christian devil" to bow his head. The game at first seemed to favour the yellow-robed gentlemen, but the laugh was turned against them when the two priests who had declared themselves invulnerable firmly seized the ends of the electric chains and remained fixed to them. As soon as the disk began to move between the leather pads, the sparks flew, and the shocks caused the unfortunate men to twist round, making the most absurd contortions, like the frogs in our laboratories, with an accompaniment of frightful yells and mad dances.

Steam also has made its way into Siam, but more for the pleasure of the king than the prosperity of his people. Our skilful paddles took us past some dozen royal yachts, which were very pretty, especially in fresh water, and generally commanded by German captains, and kept in good order by Chinese super-cargoes. Thus navigating the Me-Nam, far above Bangkok, we arrived at the dock-yard for the state boats. Imagine immense pirogues, each cut out of a single trunk of a tree, and fifty yards long; the poop and the prow completely gilded are of an extremely graceful curved form, ornamented with beautifully carved wood, representing winged dragons, dolphin crocodiles, and Siamese naiads; in the centre is a magnificent dais. It ought to be a fine sight when the king goes in state upon the water to see the progress of this flotilla of slender boats, manned by eighty rowers with gilded paddles, and attended by splendid mandarins, who are eager to reflect the royal glory, and accompanying their nautical procession with the most oriental noise.

From there we went to the building dock, where the Siamese are finishing very pretty corvettes built of teak wood on European plans; screw engines from Glasgow will soon be fitted in. These workmen are very intelligent and build very well, notwithstanding the primitive appearance of their dockyards, or rather docks. Twenty yards from the river they dig a great hole, at the bottom of which they build their vessel; when it is finished they cut a dyke, and the ship is

afloat. But their navy is mostly intended for cruising about the gulfs; the high seas are not their *forte*, since the famous campaign, when trying to double the Cape of Good Hope, they sunk on the way.

17th January, 1867.—This morning the general arrived like a clap of thunder, and told us that the king, hearing that we are off to-morrow in the Chow-Phya, wishes to see the prince again, to say good-bye to him. We hurried to that part of the palace which joins the seraglio. This end of the royal building is very fine; six stories of glazed blue, orange, and green tiles, with brilliant decorations on the cornices, and sparkling reflections on the gables, form a whole which is greatly added to by the brilliancy of the open work of this wing of kiosques. The sparkling roof is not supported by walls, but by enormous columns of teak wood, dressed, so to speak, to right and left by the waving folds of scarlet silk curtains spangled with gold and silver. The basement is a high terrace of white marble, and on the first floor rise earthenware spires like bold sentinels. There was more tameness, but at the same time a more thoroughly oriental stamp about this, than in anything we have yet seen. We were obliged to wait a few moments for the conclusion of some ceremony of leave taking. One of the king's sons was starting in his palanquin for some house in the country; and old Paramendr-Maka-Mongkut stood on the white staircase which was also used to mount on the elephants.

Soon it was our turn to go in; the king looked radiant. After having asked the identical same questions that we had answered the other day, about our age, where we lived, and the date of our leaving Europe, he began to talk with inconceivable volubility. He took the Duc de Penthievre's arm, put on his fingers one of his own great rings of plaited gold, "very very pure gold of Siam," and led him from the throne room to his private apartments; he was quite brisk and lively to-day, it was very evident he was no longer afraid of us. Mumble, mumble, mumble, a short period during which he munched a little pink fresh sugar-plum. "Me love" (then came a few words in Siamese); "very, very" (again a pause, during which the ball passes from the royal mouth into a new golden vase), "very much your high high highness, me will" (mastication becomes frantic); "give Sieraklas my photograph to to to"—he misses the spittoon—"to you," and so on. I wish I could speak Siamese as he speaks English, but I cannot tell you the quantity of Siamese, half Latin and half French words, which were quite unintelligible to us, with which he interspersed the few English words I quote. So he went on, holding the prince's hand affectionately between his, while as for us, we followed in silence through great halls sparkling with brilliancy, amongst a troop of laughing children, who seemed very much delighted with the Europeans. By some signal favour, indeed one almost unknown to strangers, as we were told by the general and Père Larnaudie, we were permitted to cross the threshold of

the harem ! Groups of fifteen or twenty women taken by surprise by this unexpected visit, instantly threw themselves down on the coloured mats which covered the floor, supporting themselves on their elbows and knees, and looking terribly frightened. There must have been 160 of them, some taking refuge on the steps of the winding staircases, on the projecting balconies, or in kiosques joined to the rooms by marble bridges ; others again fled to the shady avenues in the garden. Through the chinks of half-open doors sparkled bright eyes, animated with the liveliest curiosity. Some of them were ancient matrons, with baggy, dried-up skins, who squatted down on one side in their short yellow skirts ; then there were gentle nymphs of a chocolate colour, languid young Sultanas, with a ribbon, narrower than the width of a hand, worn across the shoulder instead of a boddice, a little blue scarf, and diamonds on their necks, hands, and feet, who crowd together like bees in a hive.

Then this drone king stepped towards the group of the elder queens, and taking one of them by the hand, he dragged her, alarmed and trembling, towards us ; he held the Sultana's arm in his right hand, and one of ours in his left, and thus we were permitted to touch her hand with the tips of our fingers. I do not wish to be disrespectful, but in any other part of the world this ancient houri would be called an old hag. "Good woman," said the king to us, as he dismissed her after this Asiatic mode of shaking hands, "she has presented me with three children." Then he went to

fetch another, and the same joining of the first fingers was gone through with the second lady. "Excellent woman," he continued, "she has given me ten!" And this is the way in which princesses are presented in Siam. Remarking that every one began any speech to the king with a sing-song phrase, which was repeated at every step since we entered the palace, Père Larnaudie explained to us that any reply to the king must be preceded by the following necessary formula: "I, worm of the earth, I, the dust beneath your feet, I, less than the hair of your head, I offer homage to the master of the world!"

For a whole hour we stopped in the harem, and saw things that it is almost impossible to describe; living pictures of human forms and jewels, gardens and fishponds, kiosques and dormitories composed of mats, all combine to give this wing of the palace an appearance both material and romantic. There are upwards of 800 women there, classed under different titles, whom the king promotes or degrades as he considers fit. One character of the place is the number of children; there are seventy-three living. I have not been able to find out the numbers of those who have died. It seems that on the first day of each year the king inscribes in a large book such of his progeny as are alive, and those that are to come! In fact, it is the houri's "stud book."

Gradually our escort was increased by some thirty of Paramendr-Maha-Mongkut's sons, each one more lively than the other, and then the sacred portals of the

chapel belonging to the harem were thrown open. It is, in miniature, as rich and beautiful a pagoda as any in the town; every one must go in bare-footed. The king made all the statuettes and precious stones shine out in the dimness by lighting with his own hand before us numbers of wax lights, and we especially remarked a god made of rock crystal, two feet high, with a ruby belt, and a pointed crown of diamonds.

The audience closed at about four in the afternoon, in the throne room, where, filled with delight and gratitude, we took leave of the worthy king Mongkut; we embraced the little princes, and saluted the harem, trusting that the fair Europeans will not be quite so frightened at the travellers as these royal Siamese ladies.

I am hurrying to write down this evening all these curious recollections, and still I feel that I have forgotten a world of incidents in this picturesque town of Siam, where we have just spent six days in pleasant bustle and perpetual excitement. I think we have seen here the most eccentric things to be seen in Asia; young damsels of the harem attired in rubies, and an old king who does nothing but cough and spit; the worship of a white elephant, and cabinet ministers performing gymnastic feats; a troop of war elephants and a body of Amazons; a combustible sovereign and fried Siamese; silver mats in the royal pagoda, and scorpions, ants, and centipedes to devour us in the shaky bamboo hut where we are perched up to write and sleep. Such are the strangely contrasting scenes

of our stay in the kingdom of Siam, to which I look back on my last evening here.

We are very lucky to have seen it in all its originality and independence. Certainly, the most extraordinary sight that can be put before Europeans is that of an Asiatic king still preserving intact the manners and customs of former Sultans. But it may be that we are the last to see the folds of the scarlet flag embroidered with a white elephant floating in all its freedom. Is it not possible that soon a little blue and a little white will be mixed with it? Tormented, harassed, and finally invaded by Europe, the old and sacred empire will succumb to the influence of France and England. I fancy I can see the conquerors of India bearding the Amazons of the great king, and uniting Siam to Rangoon with the aid of their Sepoy regiments.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE RETURN FROM SIAM.

The Siamese embassy—The lake of Thale-Sah, the subject of litigation with France—King Mongkut's policy.

20th January, 1867.—At sea on board the 'Chow Phya.'
We left Bangkok on the morning of the day before yesterday, being almost sure of arriving at Singapore time enough to take the French steamer 'L'Impératrice,' which is bound for Cochin China. We had set our hearts upon again seeing on these distant shores a bit of our native country.

We had taken our places in the Messageries Impériales nearly a month ago, so that for a few hours, at least, we might be able to see our colony in Cochin China. But, alas! we had hardly been off two hours when a royal boat came after us at full speed, and brought an order to the captain to wait on the bar of the Me-Nam for the famous embassy which King Mongkut is sending to "his brother the Emperor of the French"! And that is why we have been here for two days, pierced by the rays of a fiery sun, half-suffocated by the smell from the hold and decks of this pigsty called the 'Chow Phya,' at anchor amidst the unhealthy mud of the bar. It is impossible to describe

what we suffer, surrounded by four hundred dirty and offensive native passengers, who are noisy and very familiar. And alas! the thousands of ants which accompanied us on our first voyage did not die at Bangkok. No breath of wind comes to stir up the waves, and relieve us by sea sickness of a few of our passengers who concoct that disgusting "kapi," and smoke opium on the crowded deck. One moment of relief was granted us; in the midst of about twenty great ships at anchor near the bar was the American corvette the 'Shenandoah,' which has just arrived. She is making a journey round the world. One of her boats came off to us, and we went on board. Most of the officers were old friends of the Prince, who found amongst them various comrades who had been promoted with him, and he greatly enjoyed being able to talk with them about the naval school, and the campaigns they had made together in the 'Macedonian' and 'John Adams,' in the Gulf of Mexico.

At last some great puffs of black smoke appeared behind the groups of cocoa-nut trees, and the distinguished squadron approached and accosted us. We let them see at once how annoyed we were at being kept waiting for forty-eight hours in such company. The general came to see the embassy on board. The chief amongst them was my lord Nai-Phloi, with his son Photo, two of the most hideous monkeys in Siam. When they go to Paris they are obliged to give up the langoutis; so the ambassador had on trowsers, a red flannel waistcoat, and a black coat. His chief wife

(aged forty-two) goes with him to Paris, where even if she has no hope of creating a sensation, she can at least look after Nai-Phloi. Another lady came on board also, but only in the capacity of assistant as far as Singapore. The second envoy and minister plenipotentiary is Phra-Raxa-Sena, who is only sent to make a show, and because he is a native of Cambodia. Only think how this last claim will balance opinion in his favour! He wears apple-green flannel, and is much uglier than his chief. These gentlemen, who evidently think they are going to Lapland, have already put on warm things, although there are still 103 degrees of heat.

But behind the five other members of the mission, a whole swarm of women crowd upon deck; these are the thirty or thirty-five wives of Nai-Phloi, who are come weeping to take a tender farewell. We did our best to spare the brown diplomat from the lengthened pain of so heartrending a scene, and to put a stop to this explosion of tears and sobs. The Chow Phya whistled noisily, and the yachts turned back with their decks laden with the weepers. "All that will calm down," we were told; "even at Bangkok, when the cat is away the mice play."

Hardly embarked, the Siamese diplomats began to read over their instructions and to learn them by heart. The royal letter which took so long to write was more an uncalled-for protest against our consul than a refusal. Not being able any longer to refuse concessions which cost them so much, Callahoun's cabinet choose to make

the sacrifice in person to the French sovereign. "As you insist upon it, we concede to you the desired frontier; but we bow before Paris alone, not before the consulate, and you, sir, by devouring us yourself, will greatly honour us."

It is a fatal law amongst people whose union and nationality are neither very strongly marked, like all these tribes of southern Asia, who bear the yoke of a crowd of petty tyrannical kings, and depend either on Hue or Siam,—it is a fatal but necessary law for the labourers whose work only benefits their kings, that they must seek help beneath the protecting standard of a stronger nation, which, while improving their harbours and opening out a field of commerce, infuses new and life-giving blood into their enervated and dried up veins. Such is the situation of Cochin China, placed as it is at the entrance to China, which is so populous that it cannot support itself, and asks for rice at every favourable monsoon. Our colony, which can produce twenty times what it consumes, ought, before all, to endeavour on the one hand not to allow itself to lose its natural resources, nor to alienate its tributary kings, and, on the other, to keep open its principal outlets. This is what has caused the litigation with the Siamese cabinet, which gives us reason to fear British interference, which would put an embargo upon exports.

If the Me-Nam is the Nile of the valley of Bangkok the Me-khong is certainly that of Cambodia; and it is the tributaries of this last river that we should wish to take under our protection. Indifference or carelessness

on this point might lose all; for whoever took this position in place of us would command an immense extent of very rich country. But the Me-Khong, of which the estuary belongs to us, receives the waters of the lake Thale-Sah. The river and lake are perfect fish-ponds—a new and considerable element of wealth in these regions, where fish dried in the sun are exported with a profit of thousands, to Java, China, and India. By a singular phenomenon, and an arrangement that is perhaps unique in the world, the canals in the neighbourhood of the lake, and the lake itself, which is a small inland sea, become dry, they say, at no season in the year, and leave a layer two or three feet deep on the ground of very rare fish. This is the key to the Franco-Siamese question, which if it goes against us, greatly impoverishes us, and if in our favour gives to the protectorate of Cambodia an assured means of prosperity.

Unfortunately the frontiers of Siam and Cambodia cut the lake into two equal portions. Now that Cambodia is dependent upon us, we desire to possess the whole lake, and the Siamese desire the same.

That is why Nai-Phloi goes to Paris, carrying the innumerable fish of lake Thale-Sah beneath the folds of his robe, and running the risk of returning beneath the shadow of the porcelain cathedrals of his native town considerably lightened and impoverished. Père Larnaudie is the interpreter of this mission, as he was of the famous embassy painted by Gérôme. In fact, the missionaries have quite understood, in this delicate

position of affairs, how the interests of Siam were being menaced by the conquering projects of France. It must be owned that no European Government ever looked more favourably upon Christian civilisation than the court of Siam has. Not only have they left our creed the most complete and favoured liberty, but the missionaries have become personal friends of the king. So it is easy to understand how, out of gratitude for the past and interest in the future, they have been led in this serious affair to place themselves on the side of the complainants.

But certainly the most resolute, manly, and striking figure in this Asiatic capital is that of M. Aubaret, who, bold and strong, does his utmost for the glory of his country, biassed far more by his own conscience than by outward appearance. I do not think that the Siamese like him, I am sure that the English fear him, and I dare say he is not understood at Paris. In a constant state of irritation from the periodical deceptions made by the Orientals, as isolated as Robinson Crusoe on his island, but isolated in the midst of human beings, which is far worse than being so on a physically desert land, he feels the excitement inspired by these questions of colonial pre-eminence, which are felt a thousand times more by those who live on these distant shores than by those who are lulled by the everyday enjoyments of metropolitan cities. The fact is, we are too well satisfied that France is sufficiently large and beautiful, extending from the English Channel to the Mediterranean, and from the ocean to the Rhine. We

often make that the boundary of our horizon, and it is perhaps only those who traverse these distant seas who would care to extend their influence here, and see the flag of their commerce waving, and their ambitious ideas spread throughout the country which we look upon as wild and beneath our notice.

Let us at least hope that the Frenchmen who exile themselves as far as this are worthy to propagate our name. With some few exceptions, such as the family of Malherbe for example, what a satire I could write on the composition of the society which is either settled in Bangkok, or has in some way to do with the town! You must come to this end of the world to find anything like it; a crowd of deserters, adventurers, and bankrupts, who dispute for the melancholy honour of cheating the king. One will sell false jewels from Paris for 8000*l.*, another escapes here from his creditors at Manilla and Shanghai; a third is recalled from Bangkok, because while he is lodged there at the king's expense, he none the less charges his Government for lodging expense at the rate of 480*l.* a-year. Again, one will marry a Siamese woman who has the run of the harem, and covers her with jewels which the sultanas buy, at a price a hundred times greater than their worth, then having made something like 40,000*l.* he comes and makes a sensation in Paris, saying he has married one of the king's daughters. And then another (and this is the finest of all) writes a long flowery letter to King Mongkut from Paris, "to implore his Majesty to permit him the great honour of being

transported to Siam after his death, and being burnt on the funeral pile of the royal pagoda."

But while speaking of this moral degradation which shows itself in commercial operations too shameful to be quoted, I will not leave this celebrated kingdom without doing justice to the king himself, who beneath the pompous titles of "descendant of the angels, perfect justice, divine feet, and impregnable master of the world," has not the less reigned with very liberal ideas with regard to strangers.

He stepped from the severe discipline of a begging priest to the exercise of unlimited power, and the possession of an endless harem. Since the 3rd April, 1851, when he threw off the frock for the houris, he has encouraged the arts, built steamers, established a royal printing press, proclaimed liberty of creed, &c. But it is very true that this outward appearance, this gloss of civilization, does but cover the most intense Asiatic adoration of which he is the object; the monopoly of all the mineral and agricultural wealth of the country, the selfish enjoyment of revenues which engulphed in the royal treasury keep the kingdom in a state of stagnation, finally, the fear inspired by European influence, are equally obstacles thrown in Siam's path to prosperity.

24th January, 1867.—Our return journey, less stormy but more disgusting than our outward passage, is very nearly over. This evening the silver moon rose from the east, lighting up the peninsula of Malacca, which

we are coasting. Our Siamese friends are getting over their sea-sickness a little, and Madame Nai-Phloi, reverently kneeling, burns little sticks of incense to call down Phoebe's blessing, but as the wind falls, and the vessel throws off all her superfluous sail, like a tree which loses its leaves in autumn, still quicker did the ambassadress throw off her dinner, which she had laboured so hard to swallow. At last, after four days and fourteen hours' journey, we can again see Singapore.

30th January, 1867.—We were greeted on landing with the sad news of the departure of the French steamer twelve hours before we arrived. So fade our ardent hopes to sail with our countrymen, and see the river of Saigon. Had it not been for our untimely delay on the bar of the Me-Nam, all this pleasure might have been ours. Not being able to wait another month for a like occasion, we start to-day by the 'Behar,' an English steamer direct for Hong Kong. Our stay here has been marked by two very dissimilar events,—the arrival of General Le Marchant, commander-in-chief of the English troops in India, on a tour of inspection, and the inspection of ourselves, which we had to undergo with the ambassadress Nai-Phloi in the bazaars at Singapore, while we helped her to buy crinolines—*suivez moi jeune homme*,—and polished boots, which will make her look more absurd than her langoutis when she drives round the Bois de Boulogne.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HONGKONG.

Chinese ladies in palanquins — Prisoners with their tails cut off — A dinner at Hong-Fa-Loh-Chung's — Creation and progress of the factory at Hongkong — The Anglo-Chinese turf.

8th February, 1867.—At sea, on board the 'Behar,' within sight of the coast of China.

It is nine days since we bade farewell, with great delight, to the narrow island of Singapore. The quay of the Peninsular and Oriental Company is at some distance from the town itself, and New Harbour rather resembles a smiling bay in Tahiti than a coaling station, where the mail steamers put in for supplies. Some hundreds of huts, built of bamboos and leaves, give shelter to a tribe of "Klings." Sixty naked children in pirogues three feet long are the last aborigines of tropical climates that we shall see before those of Mexico and New Granada. These little amphibious blacks skim round the vessel with wonderful agility, and if the passengers throw a cent into the sea they dive down, fight for the bit of copper at the bottom of the water, and return in a cluster to the surface, interlaced like seaweed. They twist and turn like porpoises, so that their primitive boat often fills with water; but they have an extraordinary knack of

swimming with their feet only, and shaking out the invading waters, then jumping in without upsetting their nut-shell.

But as we advance towards the north the great 'Behar,' a steamer of 1600 tons, of 250 horse-power, and carrying a crew of 179 men, begins to get terribly tossed about. All the charm of a sea voyage is lost on board these travelling hotels, where the passengers are simply lodgers, and it is impossible to take any interest in the passage, or to consider oneself anything but a live parcel. The sea becoming higher each hour, gives us a very unpleasant time of it; it is rough, short, and chopping. The engine is working at full power, yet at times we can only make three miles an hour; our topmasts even dip into the waves, and occasionally we are brought to a stop, voluntarily or involuntarily, when the screw, lifted out of the water by the rolling, returns to it with such violence that it is paralysed by the shock. In short, the China Seas greet us with a terrible gale of wind, which, without counting some moments of real danger, makes every plank of our unwieldy awkward hull creak, and carries us out of our course to the right, almost under the lee of the Philippines.

The stormy weather has kept a good many passengers in their cabins, and the entire deck is left free to us in company with a most picturesque crew. The only real bad-weather sailors are the strict quarter-masters, true old Scotch sea dogs; the wretched-looking Bengalees in their white dresses, the Malays,

good climbers in general, but very backward in a gale, and the ebony-hued negroes from Zanzibar, with beards and hair of the most vivid red, all lose heart and shiver with fear. Beyond the picturesqueness of this maritime Babel, our only resource is in the study of all the 'Aurora Floyds' and 'Lady Audley's Secrets' in the captain's library.

This evening at last, after passing in one week from 106° of heat to 45°, not at all enjoying the sudden and unwholesome change of temperature, we are in sight of the shores of Hongkong, and enter the Sulphur channel, amongst the narrowest and most dangerous passages. After a perilous journey, and the excitement of damaged yards and sails, and a violently-shaken engine, there can be nothing at once more charming and more striking than arriving at dusk in an anchorage so quiet as that of Hongkong. Bold rocks and lofty mountains frame on all sides a lake harbour, and protect it from every wind that blows. Along their sides lie scattered, in the form of an amphitheatre, all the brilliantly-lighted up houses of the English merchants, who within twenty-five years have established a great town here. Thousands of lights stand out upon this splendid background, while hundreds of junks lying at anchor between the high-masted clippers, swing their parti-coloured lanterns, winged dragons, and transparencies, and look as if they would set fire to themselves with the rockets, crackers, and fireworks, let off from their prominent quarter-decks. It seems that we have arrived in the middle of the rejoicings for the Chinese

new year, and distant echoes even bring us some sounds of the trumpets and big drums which enliven a ball given at the Government palace. Alas! these bonfires have no effect in warming us; but yet the sight of the fireworks, multiplied by sea and land, retained us late on deck. If Bangkok is an Asiatic copy of Venice, the town of Hongkong, lying like a curtain on these steep rocky slopes, seems to us the Genoa of the far East.

9th February, 1867.—At daylight we are boarded by the sampangs. The sailors who man them are rosy-faced Chinawomen, in wide shining trousers, carrying a baby slung across their back in a scarf. These boatwomen, with muscles like prizefighters, carry off energetically the heavy chests of opium, each worth 160*l*. which form our principal cargo, exciting themselves with a shrill monotonous chant. They tranship them to the old hulk 'Fort William,' the receiving ship, whence the poison will be distributed to applicants. We picked out two boats from the flotilla, and eight ladies of the celestial empire, piling up our luggage in them, rowed us to the quay. But these boats have no hold, and the erection of our boxes putting the centre of gravity some five feet above the water, escaped capsizing by a miracle. Once on land we had to defend our goods by force of arms from the coolies, who threw themselves yelling upon us,—*et proh dolor!*—they fight so furiously that the case of chocolate and biscuit provided for the journey to Peking falls to the bottom of the salt water.

We are lodged in the Government palace, which verlooks both the town and the harbour, and so have before our eyes the sight of the noisy bustle in the streets. The Chinese coolies stumble against one another and quarrel; swarms of rich traders of the Celestial Empire are trotting about in their white linen boots, with their arms hidden in sky-blue jackets, their tails, prolonged by a third part being false, hanging down to their calves; finally, the women of the upper classes, leaning upon two servant girls of the lower orders, slowly advance one before the other their little deformed feet, the largest of which are only three and a half to four inches long. As soon as they are born the big toe is turned in, and the distorted foot is compressed as much as possible by bandages, till it becomes a mere unshaped stump, which is kept still squeezed together till they are grown up. From their limping, hobbling gait they might be taken for wooden-legged cripples; but these venerable ladies of twenty have rosy complexions, an abundance of hair elaborately dressed, and smart, well-made, bright-coloured dresses. With their jade earrings, cheeks painted with beetroot juice, eyebrows meeting their hair, narrow eyes, and utter want of expression, they look like coloured wax dolls, which would fall if one only breathed hard upon them.

This fashion of small feet has given rise to many theories. Grave scholars say that this impediment offered to travelling proves the love of the Chinese women for their native land, for these "daughters of the soil" cannot understand Europeans travelling so

far as the Chinese Empire. "These European countries must be very wretched," say they, "since women are allowed to leave them."

Historians say that it is a protest against the invasion of the Tartars, or a fashion derived from the Court at Peking. A daughter of the Emperor being born with dwarfed feet, the ladies of the household began to limp and compressed their feet at once. From court to town and country the fashion spread like an epidemic, and it became the distinctive mark of the aristocracy, the impossibility of walking about or working being henceforward the proof of sufficient wealth to keep servants.

But according to scandal, the Chinese woman being by nature somewhat flighty, this is a certain means of confining her to the conjugal abode, as otherwise she must immediately fall upon her nose,—a very proper penalty for an escapade. To sum up, I think that from every point of view the fashion is ugly, repulsive, and atrociously cruel.

As the streets here are as steep as the roof of a house, when they are not interminable staircases, or ladders cut in the rock, Europeans only move about them in palanquins. At every turn there is a stand for these human cabs, and two or four strong coolies, taking it in turns, will harness themselves to one for a moderate payment. We appreciate highly the elasticity of these light bamboo frames, and the strength of the Chinese shoulders, as they carry us, all three abreast, at a good round pace, and in this manner we scaled, within three hours of our landing, the highest

peak in the island of Hongkong, called Victoria Peak (1825 feet), whence the view extends over the neighbouring archipelago of islands, and in the distance to the great ocean itself. But what barren bare country these first-seen shores of China present! What a chaos of grey rock and desert mountain!

On our return the Governor took us out in his state palanquins, with six bearers to each in theatrical uniforms. These palanquins are to the hired palanquins what the Lord Mayor's coach is to a cab. Our bearers are dressed in scarlet, with the arms of England painted on their conical hats, and we have an escort of Indian sepoy armed to the teeth. We crossed the quarter containing the European villas, then the crowded district of Chinese kennels, and entered the prison, a granite building, the most remarkable in Hongkong, and next to the warehouses certainly the most characteristic; for if all the richest China merchants are assembled in this English colony, which forms another Singapore in the Canton river, it is, on the other hand, a harbour of refuge to all the thieves who can escape the mandarins of the Celestial Empire, and come here to seek their fortune. Every hundred yards a sepoy is stationed, whose office it is to knock down all evil-doers with an iron-wood club, called a Penang lawyer. This is by way of a first warning, the second is a bullet from a rifle kept always loaded. After eight o'clock in the evening no Chinaman has a right to be abroad without a lantern, and a pass signed by a European. It appears, notwithstanding, that as soon

as the dusk falls, there are few towns so dangerous. and we were told of the most audacious outrages. Proof of this was given too by the sight of about a thousand natives within the prison walls. The first punishment inflicted on crossing the threshold is the loss of their tails; one cut from the scissors degrades them for life. The wretched creatures would prefer twenty years at the galleys to this capillary operation, which reduces them to the lowest scale in the social ladder, and the term of their imprisonment over obliges them to hide themselves far from mankind.

As we passed through the echoing passages, we saw these new "Alcibiades' dogs" weeping for the loss of their tails, and slinking along the walls full of shame and consternation. We proceeded next to the court where the English authorities administer justice in public. Suddenly an excited group breaks through the crowd and mounts the platform. It was a Malabar policeman, holding in his hand by their seven tails, as one might hold a leash of hounds, seven Celestials, whom he had just arrested as they were robbing a house in the suburbs. We were much struck with this very original sight, and I can give you no idea of the grimaces of these sneaking scoundrels as they were soundly shaken by the officer's hand. Sometimes the tail is entirely false, and is left alone, it appears, in the hands of justice.

To finish up this interesting day the Governor, instead of offering us the banquet prepared by his French cook, reputed excellent, gave us a real mandarin's

supper, in the most Chinese eating-house of the Chinese town, at Hong-Fa-Loh-Chung's, in Taëping-Sehan. We climbed to the top of a wooden house, which has thirty private rooms on each floor. An infernal din resounded from all sides, and everything was illuminated with parti-coloured lanterns. With an accompaniment of single-stringed violins and tambourines played by four smiling painted Chinese girls, we sat down with the Governor, Sir Charles MacDonnel, Lady MacDonnel, a friend of hers, and the aide-de-camp, Mr. Brinkley, to a table strewn with flowers, and covered with more than two hundred little dishes, and as many tiny cups, each of us was furnished besides with two little ivory sticks, for knives and forks. Here is the actual bill of fare, and order of the banquet.

Preserved fruits, iced fishes' roe in caramel, almonds and raisins, sharks' fins with glue sauce, a kind of black puddings, hashed dog with lotus sauce, birds'-nest soup,¹ lily-seed soup, sinews of whale with sugar sauce, Kwai-Poh-Hing ducks, stewed gills of sturgeon, dried fish and rat croquettes, shark-s'-fat soup, stewed star-fish,² and freshwater tadpoles. The last dish, mentioned by M. Huc, had always seemed to me imaginary. Now that I have partaken of it, I must confess that it is awful. Finally a sweet pudding made of fishes' fins,

¹ It was the only eatable thing: a coarse insipid kind of vermicelli, which is sold for its weight in silver. The dinner was ordered by Mr. C. Smith, Controller of the Chinese quarter, and cost ten taels (64*d.*) per head.

² The star-fish is a slimy lump, which we saw fished for on the coral banks on the eastern shores of Australia.

fruit, ham, almonds, and spices, and for dessert a lotus and almond soup.

The wines were a pink wine, with a very medicinal taste, and "sam-chow," a lukewarm, sickening rice spirit. The last adjective may be used to qualify any of the viands which we tried to force upon our usually strong digestions. I think when I return I could reproduce for you, with a large pot of gelatine, some giblets of fowls, the sweepings of a druggist's shop, and the bottom of an apothecary's drawer, that anti-gastric combination which calls itself a really Chinese dinner. It is certainly the first and last time that I will allow myself to be taken in as a stranger by such a slimy, insipid, sweet, disgusting mess. What signify the charming and beautifully-painted porcelain, the cups and saucers which a European collector would envy! the dog, the rat, the sharks' fins, that we ate made us regret the greasy concoctions of the Chow-Phya, which is saying a good deal.

But hold! my first impressions of China must surely be very commonplace. A Chinaman walking through our streets no longer attracts the attention of the passers-by. You must have seen thirty, and know them as well as if you had seen ten thousand, so that there is no use in my describing them. Besides, by dint of being extraordinary, the Chinese Empire has become, if not ordinary, at least very well known. Here, more than anywhere else I may say :

"Qu'il faut être ignorant comme un maître d'école,
Pour se flatter de dire une seule parole
Que personne ici-bas n'ait pu dire avant vous."

The hundreds of books which have been published about China discourage me at the outset from speaking of it. In fact, nothing that I have seen to-day has surprised me. I was prepared for all, and my expectations have not been surpassed. Still, if China in its oddities, in its customs and ideas, has been displayed for us by those who have studied it in its essentially internal aspect,—if the China of porcelain and screens, with its human or earthenware monsters, its little feet and birds' nests, has become a mere child's story, I think there still remains to be found a less picturesque but more interesting point of view, and notwithstanding all the particulars of my daily journal I intend to study it, namely, the combination of Chinese eccentricities with civilization imported from Europe; the contagion of modern ideas which must affect this nation so long left stagnant; the mingling of the foreign tide with the native stream; the shock of the missionary against the Buddhist bonze, of the steamboat against the junk, of Paris goods against native manufactures, bales of English cotton against lackered screens; in one word, the struggle between the great utilitarian movement, and the most proverbial stagnation in the world. This will certainly be newer, though more prosaic, and will take me out of the beaten track, where every stage is already marked, into a less known way, where some discoveries may perhaps be made, and where at any rate one's ideas will be sharpened. This alone could enliven all these pagodas, silk-robed mandarins, banquets provided from a chemist's shop, and

enamels, all so well known at home that a description of them would have no more effect than a magic lantern, of which the programme is known beforehand. If a modern China does exist grafted on the classical China, may it be given to me to discover it!

18th February, 1867, Sunday.—When I went to church this morning I was struck with amazement at seeing the French missionaries officiating in Chinese dress, with their heads shaved, tails (false ones, of course) falling over the chasuble halfway down their legs, pointed Tartar moustaches, sky-blue tight-fitting jacket and short trousers, high-soled shoes; in short, the usual clerical dress replaced by full Chinese equipment. I was far from expecting this first transformation. But it appears that this concession to native customs has had the greatest effect upon the people; by approaching nearer to them in externals, and breaking through the European crust which raises an impassable barrier between the barbarian and the “sons of heaven,” the ministers of God have made their way more easily to these ignorant hearts, and the greater facility thus given to the missionary for travelling has at the same time lessened the moral distance. The congregation, composed of about a thousand believers, contained as many Portuguese as Chinese women. I easily recognised the southern devotion of the former on seeing them arrive in their mantillas and bright-coloured dresses at the moment of the “*Ita missa est*,” to kneel

and kiss the dust. The latter, who had mostly small feet, were obliged to lean upon their maids at every movement.

But if ecclesiastical authority has rightly made a step towards the local customs, civil authority at Hong Kong has remained exclusively English. It is curious to follow the successive phases through which this rocky island, nine miles long by four wide, has passed.

In 1839 it was inhabited only by 7000 pirates. It numbers now 125,000 souls, and has an anchorage of 2264 vessels annually, weighing 1,013,748 tons. An advanced post of the Canton river, the roadstead at Hongkong was first used as a station for the East India Company's vessels, bringing opium to the Kwang-Tong. Then in 1839 it became a harbour of refuge, when the Imperial commissioner Lin burnt the celebrated factories, and declared open war to the villainous trade imposed upon China by Europe. In 1841 the English Captain Elliott obtained a partial cession of the island, the treaty of Nankin gave it up entirely in 1842, and in 1843 it was proclaimed a colony. Such was the commencement of this important trading station, the first foundation of which was laid by the house of Jardine. The same founder's house still displays more brilliantly than ever its city of warehouses, and in looking through my glasses at the ships in the harbour, I have already counted nine steamers and twelve sailing vessels belonging to it. These great English houses form a world of their own, with their fleets on the seas, and regiments of coolies on land; their barrack-like counting-

houses extend along the quays, whence they export tea and silks, and import cotton goods and opium. On an average, each of their vessels with its cargo is worth from 320,000*l.* to 400,000*l.*, and you may imagine what floating capital is represented by their twenty or five-and-twenty ships hastening under all steam, or all sail, from London to Calcutta, from Calcutta to Hongkong, Amoy, and Shanghai.

The fluctuations of trade are more unexpected and capricious here than anywhere else. Sometimes a typhoon drives out of their course hundreds of junks whose heads—or rather whose eyes—were directed to Hongkong, and sends them into Saigon or Singapore. Sometimes rice falls 25 per cent, as on the 23rd May, 1853, when there arrived in one night 35,000 picols all at once (more than 4,500,000 lbs.) or the tea arriving abundantly from the interior, throws out every one's calculations, and makes terrible havoc with for instance the great house of Dent in 1865. Still, this is the important point by which England maintains a hold upon China, and there is something very striking in the appearance of this great commercial station, where the Dents and Livingstons, the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and our Messageries Impériales, &c., emulate one another in activity. I certainly did not expect to find two daily newspapers here, the 'Evening Mail,' and the 'Daily Press,' and three weekly journals, the 'China Mail,' the 'Echo do Povo,' in Portuguese, and the 'Omnibus,' in German. Add to these, schools for Chinese children, where 1870 scholars are taught, two

cathedrals, clubs, and fifteen wealthy banks,—such is the European sentry keeping guard in the south of China.

Although from a monetary point of view Hongkong is a magnificent trading centre, it is a residence little to be desired in regard to climate, security, and cost of living. The summer sun has bred such fevers that the English regiments stationed here have been more than decimated, and the English press has compared this station to Cayenne. And, furthermore, the 2000 European merchants are so lost in this population of 121,000 Chinese, and 25,000 other Orientals, that they vainly strengthen the local police, and treat the town as if in a state of siege. Thefts, murders, and burglaries are unceasing. This harbour and the quays which border it look to me like those flat dishes used as fly-catchers, where some kind of tempting bait is put, to allure to their destruction all noxious insects. Escaping from their persecutors the mandarins, flying from exorbitant taxes to seek their fortune in a new and heterogeneous society, the Chinese, whose numbers in this island have increased to 118,500 owing to the bait of European trade, converge towards Hongkong, to work a little, murder occasionally, steal constantly, and finally get themselves hung.

I tried this morning to read up from a local almanack the annals of the colony since 1839, but I give it up; every month there is but one announcement, and this announcement is always of the following character:—
“25th September, 1855.—H. M. S. ‘Bittern’ pursued a

fleet of pirates up to Shei-Fou, and sunk thirty-three junks and 1200 men." The next day a "go-down," or merchant's warehouse, is blown up by a mine, and thirty coolies are discovered preparing to destroy a whole suburb in this way. The day after it is a Chinese baker who has put so much arsenic into his dough that his journeymen were taken ill even before the bread was delivered. Another time there comes the news that three merchant vessels have been taken by a fleet of pirates. The 'Magicienne,' the 'Inflexible,' and the 'Plover' start off at once, and again forty junks are sunk and a battery destroyed. In short, "piracy! piracy!" might be the motto for this harbour, from which a dozen gunboats are daily sent out to give chase to the innumerable sea rovers who swarm in the neighbouring channels. In one month alone thirty-nine cases of piracy were brought before the judges.

It is very natural that in the neighbourhood of these Chinamen, who furnish plenty of coolies it is true, but are dangerous to the commonwealth, prices should all be very high in the East. Mutton costs forty-two cents per catty (15*d.* per pound); the servants and coolies, of whom it is necessary to employ a large number, cost 19*l.* a-year, and a single floor of four rooms lets easily for 50*l.* a month.

If individuals must spend largely, and look for compensation to their extensive commercial transactions, the State also, in making Hongkong a free port, has had to undertake expenses which exceed the receipts by 126,000*l.*, for the sake of concentrating on one point

all the trade of China, and increasing the gain of the productive ports a thousandfold, in proportion to the losses of the trans-shipping port.

In consequence of the distrust felt of the native population, the imminent danger of a rupture with the mandarins of the neighbouring provinces, and the state of armed trade which characterises our dealings with the Celestial Empire, England has been obliged to leave this colony of twenty-six thousand inhabitants under a despotic rule. The Governor, appointed by the Crown, shares his power with the Executive Council (consisting of the Colonial Secretary, the Commander of the Forces, and the Attorney-General), and the Legislative Council (composed of the three officials before mentioned, to whom are joined the treasurer, the auditor, and the surveyor-general, besides three non-official members appointed by the home Government on the nomination of the Governor). The colony has sometimes been agitated by the most serious questions, and at these critical moments, when a common interest broke down the theoretical limits of power, it was not the Governor of his own motion, but the whole European community, who decided on the measures to be taken. In 1858, for instance, the mandarins of the mainland issued threatening proclamations against all Chinese who should remain in the service of Europeans at Hongkong. In a few days thousands of coolies had migrated. There were no porters for the goods, no provisions for the markets. The meeting forced the Governor to exceed his powers, and to threaten a declaration of war upon

the mandarins who were fomenting this desertion, if they did not retract their orders, absolutely contrary to the Treaty just signed at Tien-Tsin. A Chinese cannon-ball was the only response made to our flag of truce. It is unnecessary to add that a month later Nam-Tau, the head-quarters of the rebellion, was in ashes.

Notwithstanding the nightly robberies on land, the internal divisions between the rival tribes of the "Haccas" and the "Puntis," the constant capture of European vessels by pirates, who murder the captain and crew, the English authorities are crushing the bands of marauders who flock into Hongkong like a mouse-trap, and endeavouring to win to their side the honest part of the native population: here for instance is the name of a respectable Chinaman, Wong-Ashing, on a jury list.

11th February, 1867.—Hongkong is in a state of excitement to-day. There is a great meeting in the valley of Wong-Nei-Chong, where the challenge cup of 480*l.* is to be run for. Behold the transformation of China by the English jockey club! the Chinese turfite, betting man, gentleman rider or jockey! Beautiful avenues along the Queen's Road and the Praya lead to the racecourse, and on the way we pass through a lively and curiously-contrasted crowd. On one hand, Englishmen in light carriages, provided with champagne and lobster salad, as if for the Derby; on the other, thousands of palanquins, in which are seated the

rich Chinese merchants, dressed in the most splendid embroideries. We went into the stand, whence the view was really picturesque. The course is marked in a green valley, framed as if on purpose by high granite rocks, to our left only there is an opening, showing, as if through a natural doorway, the blue sea covered with junks, plying under their yellow matting sails.

The racecourse was crowded by twenty thousand excited Chinamen, eager for the sight. The stand was surrounded by the English community, in fashionable European dress, intermixed with the officers of the garrison. After the officers' race, on which bets had been laid proportioned to the proverbial wealth of English merchants in China, came the Chinese horsemen, struggling with their hog-maned ponies, who looked remarkably frisky and unruly. Some wore a crush hat, which contrasted oddly with their blue jacket, yellow short trousers, and white satin boots; others had pigtails hanging over their English jockey's coat; others again, Japanese grooms, were perfectly bare to the waist, showing their backs and arms tattooed in the most brilliant colours. The whole sight was most amusing. Twelve horses started. Five as they passed the stand turned straight round to their stables; of the rest, four ran into one another at the turn, and fell like a pack of cards; one ran away and upset a dozen palanquins, filled with Chinese ladies in full dress; the two remaining "celestial" jockeys then contested the prize, excited by the yells of the delighted crowd. The winner, rolling about like a sack

on his horse's back, screaming at the top of his voice, and flogging with his pigtail with all his might, got in half a length before his rival, whose skin served him for top boots, and who came in in spite of himself, clinging with arms and legs round the neck of his runaway horse. Three more races followed amidst general laughter, and the furious bets of almost all the Chinamen present.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MACAO.

The piratical shores — Portuguese appearance of Macao — The theatre — Camoën's grotto — Visit to the "Barracoons," or office for the exportation of Chinese coolies — Past splendour and present difficulties of the colony — Night arrival at the floating city of Canton.

WE tore ourselves away from the international race-course to take ship for Macao on board the 'Fire Dart,' an American two-decked steamer, where we have for travelling companions six hundred Chinamen with their wives, packed together like anchovies. They are all peacefully smoking opium, huddled up in their quilted wrappers to keep out the cold. It appears that they are not always so amiably disposed, and it has always been a service of danger to Europeans to carry a cargo of "Celestials." Three of this American Company's vessels have already fallen into the hands of the pirates, thanks to the connivance of the passengers, who secured the persons of the captain and crew, when they had not courage to murder them.

We passed through the Sulphur Channel, and between the islands of Lantas, Chung, Patung, and Siko, of fatal memory. In these narrow straits were captured and burnt by the pirates, the 'Arratoon Apar' (eleven Europeans killed), the steamer 'Queen,' the 'Wing-

Sunn,' near the nine islands; the 'Cunifa,' the 'North Star,' the 'Chico,' and finally the 'Andreas,' with which the list closes in 1865. The details of these struggles between an unhappy European ship and often some thirty junks are horrible. The vessel is stopped in a narrow pass by converging fires, boarded, and every living creature on board massacred, excepting those who were in the pre-arranged plot. Then, when the cargo has been transferred to the attacking vessels, and the prey divided between them, hull and masts, sole witnesses of the carnage, are set fire to and sunk to the bottom of the sea. All the sailors of the 'Fire Dart' consequently, from the cabin boy to the stokers, are ostentatiously armed with revolvers; between decks and on the orlop deck are cannon loaded with grape-shot, but instead of being pointed seawards they are so arranged that at a signal from the captain's whistle each one would completely sweep the interior of the ship, while another signal would send the whole crew into the tops. In fact, the first culprits to be exterminated, in case of an attack from the outside, are the native passengers, without whose co-operation the pirates would never attack our vessels. For the destruction of a steamer a vast conspiracy is needed, of which I have already mentioned to you some frightful results; but a favourable opportunity is alone needed for the loss of a sailing ship. Should she be becalmed, the fishermen, now become pirates, quickly set twenty oars in motion on each junk, and lay siege to the unhappy clipper, who lies powerless.

We may thank heaven that we have only seen the fields of battle which have witnessed such disasters and that our Chinamen have no thought beyond inhaling their opium in lazy beatitude. The clearness of the atmosphere showed us every curve in the bays of this archipelago of a thousand islands, which lies between Hongkong and Macao. Suddenly in a narrow strait we came upon a number of junks. A great eye is painted on the bow, superstitiously supposed to assist the sailing of the vessel; and three guns in the forecastle, three on either side flanking it, and three more in the poop, give the most warlike appearance to these fishermen's barques. Whole families live on these lofty decks; there they are born, marry, and die, and five generations herd together there in the most inextricable confusion.

In spite of the fanciful paintings, the brilliant standards, and scarlet and gold bands which decorate the exterior of these vessels, with their bold graceful curves, the only thing I can compare to what we see through the openings between decks and on the poop is the interior of a rag-gatherer's basket. At sight of our 'Fire Dart' some hundred, or hundred and fifty, human beings appear through the hatchways of each junk, and the marine ant-hill, either for amusement or bravado, beats its tom-toms with all its might, and lighting rockets and crackers, sends them out in all directions.

But there is something more than gewgaws and child's play on board these junks. There are both the

birth and progress of art. The Chinese are barbarians (it is our turn to retort the epithet) in so far that they can only sail with the wind astern, coming down the coast with one monsoon and waiting five months to go up with another. Their thick sails, made of matting stretched flat out by five bamboos placed across the sail, are very heavy in appearance. But the rudder is really a work of art; it is suspended to a windlass, that it may be raised or lowered, according to the pressure required, and is worked by a very long handle. Its power too is multiplied fivefold by a curious and ingenious arrangement. The Chinese have discovered that a much less resistance is offered to water by an even and compact barrier than if this barrier is pierced with a number of holes in the form of a lozenge. The water then no longer simply washes against the tiller, but endeavours to force a passage through these two narrow holes, and the working is much assisted by this struggle.

After a passage of three hours and a half we rounded the harbour of Tupa, and the peninsula of Macao appeared to us, lighted by the last rays of the sun, the Portuguese flag floating over the steep fortifications which command this rocky country. Imagine seven or eight bold peaks crowned with red granite battlements, an agglomeration of barren mounds reaching to within two hundred yards of the level of the sea, succeeded by a chaos of houses, with southern-looking terraces for roofs, and painted blue, green, and red; a dozen church steeples, windows barricaded with iron bars, paved

alleys two yards wide, winding through suburbs built in sugar-loaf shape, and below all this the circular harbour, where thousands of junks are crowded together. Such is Macao.

We landed on a quay thronged with coolies, and climbed the most Portuguese of these "Calçados do bom Jesus," and "Travessas do San Agostino," mere steep passages between low granite houses, which look like prisons. They are a curious race, the conquerors of this country. The descendants of Albuquerque, who crowd the streets here, hanging on to their swords, or muffled in comforters, form a race of half-breed Portuguese and Chinese, the latter being already crossed with a mixture of Malay, Indian, and Negro. They are stunted and sickly, with pale chocolate complexions, and long narrow eyes, and vegetate here in a semi-Christian, semi-sorcerer atmosphere, half-civilised and half-Asiatic. There are two Anglo-American public houses here, and after an indescribable journey through dark lanes we found shelter in one of them, a damp, stinking barn, with no windows, and where myriads of cockroaches had taken up their abode before us.

Our stay here will evidently be only temporary, for we may hope for a better lodging. When, on the occasion of our occupation of Mexico, war threatened to break out between France and the United States, the Duc de Penthièvre was obliged, to his great regret, to resign his commission in the Federal Navy, that he might not run the risk of being forced to fight against his own country. But not wishing to give up active

service, he passed with the same rank into the navy of his cousin the king of Portugal, made his first campaign in the 'Don Juan,' and a second, of eighteen months, as lieutenant on board the corvette 'Bartholomeo Diaz,' on the coast of Africa, at Rio, Monte Video, and Buenos Ayres. As he is still in the Portuguese service, though on leave, he may make use of the privileges of a navy in which he has served, and he has written to the Governor this evening.

You can conceive nothing more dreary and disgusting than our lodging, so, to escape the armies of devouring insects, we begged the innkeeper to send one of his coolies to show us the way to a Chinese theatre, the only sight to be seen after sunset. I feel myself turning into a monkey here, as we climb the stony ladders dignified with the name of streets. We arrived at last at a wooden shed, resounding with the most deafening music. The place was filled with Chinamen, eating, smoking, and drinking, at little tables holding four each. We made our way to the proscenium, and found a tragedy going on, diversified with acrobatic feats, which had lasted since ten o'clock in the morning. But we had not been more than an hour enjoying this curious scene, with our fingers in our ears, when suddenly a great disturbance took place, benches and tables were upset, and a disorderly mob, pushed forward from the entrance door, made its way through with noisy confusion. What had happened? There entered the Governor's aides-de-camp, a navy captain, and the whole staff in full uniform, with cocked hats, and a

whole collection of orders on their breasts. The effect was tremendous. As we had been till then the only Europeans in the room, and were in plain travelling dress, all the Chinese spectators fell back, trampling upon one another, thinking that we were going to be arrested. But on the contrary, these gentlemen have been most courteously sent to the Prince, to present the Governor's compliments, and invite him to stay at the palace, and to effect this they have been obliged to follow us on this dark and cold night through all the alleys of the town. The immense crowd which thronged the entrance of the theatre, empty just now, proved that this unusual walk had roused up every one. After a mutual exchange of courtesies, it was agreed that we should avail ourselves of the invitation at noon to-morrow.

As we think it likely that state dinners will in future put an end to our tourist researches, we made use of the remains of our non-official visit to Macao, and starting again unweariedly with our coolie, we made our way into the cleanly-kept Chinese town, lighted with charming lanterns. The most curious things here are the gambling houses, for Macao is the Monaco of the Celestial Empire. Most of the wealthy Chinamen from Hainan, Kwang-Tong, and Tonkin, are fools enough to come and lose their money here at "trente et quarante," which is prohibited in their own towns. A patriarchal croupier, with a white tail, a beard consisting of four hairs well gummed together, and immensely long nails, presides at the table, round which crowd hundreds of players.

It was near midnight, and having seen enough of these odd-looking Chinamen in their silk dresses, walking about, each with his great paper lantern, we asked our coolie to lead us back to the cockroaches' den. I do not know if the aides-de-camps' uniforms made him think that we were covered with gold, but the scoundrelly Celestial amused himself by leading us astray. The houses became fewer, and we found ourselves gradually in a desert country, looking anxiously at one another. Shrubs and lagoons were all that we could see before us, on a road that was dwindling into a sheep-track, while six Chinese fellows, walking briskly a hundred yards behind us, followed every turn we chanced to take. The sudden disappearance of our perfidious guide showed us the state of affairs at once, and in this haunt of the beggars, cut-throats, and villains of China we both began to think that the few minutes before us might very possibly represent the whole lifetime that remained to us. The human shadows which dogged us hung about us more and more persistently, coming nearer as soon as overhanging rocks darkened the road still more, and scattering again if we turned resolutely upon them to put an end to this odious persecution. But the fellows were evidently waiting for some accomplices, for their whistling remained unanswered, and the firmness of our demeanour still had some effect upon them. At last, after more than half an hour, during which our hearts beat anxiously, a dim light appeared in the direction where we had always instinctively looked for the European town; it

was the grated window of a guard house,—a gate of the fortifications. Acquaintance with military formulas, and a thorough knowledge of Portuguese, soon made the Prince triumph over the hesitations of the artilleryman on guard behind the battlements, and our pursuers were quickly out of sight. We returned much edified by the foresight of the coolie, who may boast of having got off cheaply; for if he had disappeared a little less hastily he would have been the first to pay for his friends. After recounting our adventures to Fauvel, we lay down on the ground, wrapped in our cloak, as in Australia, and vowing, luckily not too late, that we would not be caught again.

12th February.—Our courteous guides to-day have been in the morning Don Osorio, the Governor's aide-de-camp, and in the afternoon His Excellency himself, Don José Maria do Ponte Horta, major in the artillery, with whom we have visited the whole domain,—no very difficult matter, as it appears to be about three miles long, by one and a quarter wide. This promontory is of the exact shape of the impression of a human footstep, of which the heel is turned to the sea, while the big toe meets a tongue of land some four hundred yards wide, which joins it to the great island of Hian-Shan. The heel is formed of nine high rocky hills, which command the forts of Bour-Parto, Barra, San João, and San Jeronimo. The inner curve of the sole is crowded with the houses of the Chinese, who number a hundred and twenty-five thousand, while the two

thousand Portuguese residents are located on the opposite and outer side. The Praya Grande, or marine parade, is the principal street; along it are rows of houses behind gloomy iron gratings, the castello of the Governor, capitania do porto, official or mercantile residences, all having exactly the same bright colours, arches, and monastic appearance as the houses of the mother country. Suppose, then, that a wall runs along the instep (our wall of last night), and that the toes are all curled up; these are only mountains starting up, on the summits of which are erected the forts of San Francisco, de la Guia, de San Paulo do Monte, and seven or eight others. Then comes the plain country, covered with market gardens, the village of Mong-Ha, and the barrier sixteen feet high, which divides the colony from the Chinese territory.

The roads that we follow for our interesting walk are cut along the face of the granite cliffs, with the most picturesque effect. A hundred big guns, pointed at the heights, share the duty of defending the promontory from the side of the encircling ocean, or bombarding the suburb of the hundred and twenty-five thousand pigtailed in case of a rising.

We visited next the southern Praça da Sé, the cathedral, the old town hall, where the Senate now sits, and where the following inscription has figured since 1654:—

CIDADE DO NOME DE DEOS—NAO HA OUTRA MAIS LEAL.¹

¹ City of the Name of God!—none more faithful exists.

We inspected the barracks, the monasteries, the church of St. Paul, built by the Jesuits in 1594, and of which three parts have been destroyed by fire, l'Asylos dos Pobres, &c.—in short, a whole series of old Christian buildings surmounted with crosses, ornamented with images of saints in niches, covered with curious frescoes. Add to these the mantillas covering the women's heads, the huge long black hat under whose shade the monks walk about, the white caps of the sisters of charity, and one might swear that one was in the shadow of the basilicas of Lisbon or Genoa. After the novel sights we have been seeing for the last ten months, in entirely new worlds, and in Asiatic countries where the industrial invasion at least has the stamp of the present day, it is like a dream to find at the very gate of the Celestial Empire an antique collection of Christian ruins, which seem to bear witness to there never having been in this far distant country any but our ancient buildings and our ancient beliefs.

At about three o'clock boats with colours flying took us out, between three hundred noisy junks, to the gunboat 'Principe Carlos,' lying in the roadstead, where we drank to the health of the "Armada." Then we took the shore road, under groves of evergreen trees, washed by the waves. The winter sun, of a somewhat pale dull red, was low on the horizon, and could hardly penetrate the shade of the bower where we found ourselves, in the Grotto of Camoëns. History relates how the great poet, having been wrecked on

these inhospitable shores, only saving the first lines of the 'Lusiades,' reached, by swimming, the Portuguese colony, then just coming into existence. He took refuge in this grotto washed by the waves, and while weeping over his exiled lot, sang the glories of his country. The site itself, so wild and lonely, with a view extending over the Chinese dominions, and over the ocean unbroken by any continent as far as the snows of the South Pole,—the site, with its gigantic blocks of granite, must undoubtedly have assisted in the inspiration of his admirable epic. But the local authorities have unhappily profaned its solemn and poetic simplicity. In a place filled with such touching recollections, which should have been left undisturbed for the mind to dwell upon, a kiosk has been erected like those on the Paris boulevards, with verses stuck up upon it, and behind the bars of which is a ridiculous papier maché bust, intended to represent the exile—the noble and tender-hearted poet.

Another exile—a Frenchman—has endeavoured, on the north side of the grotto, to unite in this isolated spot the memory of two misfortunes suffered in the cause of literature, and his production is signed, "Louis Rienzi, religious poet, 30th March, 1827."

A hasty gallop over hill and dale carried us to the village of Mong-Ha, where is a pagoda which has a very fine effect from a distance, and smells extremely nasty on a nearer approach. The bonzes will not do the honours for nothing; but there is one really curious fact here. From the ancient date of the colonisation

the Chinese have become so Portuguese, or the Portuguese so Chinese, that the Buddhas are called, even by the bonzes, by the names of our saints, and there are by the dozen St. Francis and St. Augustines with four arms, three heads, and bodies with fold upon fold of fat.

The twilight was nearly over as we came to the end of the domain of the colony, and found ourselves on the narrow tongue of land which joins Macao to Hiang-Shan. Two hundred yards from us, on either hand, the waves of the rising tide were breaking, and the granite barrier of the Chinese Empire barred our forward way. Here then, at last, was the famous land where the Emperor's yellow flag floats freely. But how were our illusions destroyed! Covered with the filth, the offal, and rags of the "descendants of fire" the "Celestial Flowery Land" first appeared to us. A party of sixty men, dressed in white, beating tom-toms, and shrilly yelling, passed by us, carrying a corpse to the grave. And this strange procession, appearing more vividly under the crimson glow of the dying light, and the shades of night already creeping on, made still more impressive the account we were given of the tragedy acted on this spot.

In this very place was murdered the last Governor but one of Macao, the gallant Ferreira do Amaral. Having taken up the claim of Portugal to the entire possession of Macao, he drew upon himself the wrath of the mandarins of Canton, who were determined at all hazards to support their officials in co-equal jurisdiction

in the Portuguese colony. Instead of proclaiming open war they resorted to the less expensive method of assassination. On the 22nd August, 1849, their bravos fell upon Amaral as he was riding along this wall, with an aide-de-camp, and carried to the feet of the Governor of Canton the gory head and hands of the unfortunate officer.

13th February.—We are beginning to get accustomed to the wintry weather, and long walks over the most interesting ground make the time pass quickly.

On the summit of the Monte we visited first the ruins of a Jesuit convent, and then proceeded to study the details of the most characteristic feature of Macao, the "Barracons," the celebrated establishments for the pretended "emigration of coolies," more justly branded with the name of trade in Chinamen. The first shop of these human salesmen that we entered presented the most smiling exterior, terraces decked with flowers, great porcelain vases, mahogany furniture in the reception rooms of the officials. One small desk in a corner, with piles of huge well-thumbed books, alone reminded us that this was the place for the "registration of human flesh." The walls were covered with sensation pictures (the arts are so appreciated here!) representing the happy vessels intended for the transport of the said cargoes of the "Sons of Heaven" to the deadly sun of the Cuban plantations, or the fetid guano pits of Peru. I regret to say that the French flag is seen far too often in these melancholy advertisements.

At first sight it looks very fine. But after the proper exchange of civilities with the black masters of this place, we were shown some long corridors, on either side of which are sheds packed close with Chinamen "on the point of emigrating." They are here with distorted features and sallow complexions, awaiting their departure, their loathsome rags scarcely covering them, and they wallow in the most abominable filth, bearing the hideous stamp of the lowest poverty.

The history of this coolie trade is most deplorable, though it has only existed nineteen years, its annals include the most horrible massacres, the most infamous speculations, a thousand times more atrocities than the negro trade which it replaced—blood, always blood! In the southern provinces of China, internal wars are raging, which no force as yet has been able to crush. The prisoners made by the victorious clan are sold by them to a Portuguese trader in men, who has agents cruising along the coast. Such is the chief method of recruiting! Then the innumerable pirates who specially infest this archipelago bring to these warehouses the greater part of their prizes—poor fishermen, overpowered by unequal numbers. Finally, united by the hope of gain to be regulated by themselves, some wretched Chinese and European contractors arrange together to attract by a thousand temptations, and bring here on credit, crowds of gamblers who come here to try their fortune at the licensed gambling houses that we visited last night. For two that gain, twenty lose their last farthing, and

the wretched debtors must give up their own flesh and blood to their specious creditors. We were witnesses of this custom in Siam with regard to women, children, and slaves; we find it again in China for free men, who must pay their debts with their liberty.

Whether taken by force, or artfully deceived there, thousands of these poor devils are embarked here, without any supervision, for their remote destinations. Five times in ten a mutiny breaks out on board and the European crew is ruthlessly murdered; or else, through the cruelty of the irritated captain, the whole human cargo dies of suffocation in the hold. I can conceive nothing more thrilling than the accounts of these voyages. Can it be wondered at that in a sea voyage of four or five months these men, who have been sold and treated like cattle, thrust into a stinking hold, should become mere wild beasts, and mad with hunger and thirst, and the burning need of air and freedom, should throw themselves in a body of 500 or 600 upon the handful of European sailors, who are only the blind tools of the speculators, and who have become in their eyes their tormentors?

The most fortunate arrive at their journey's end to pass long years in slavery, leading a far harder life than the negroes. The planter or guano collector saw in the black man a piece of property, and took some care of him that he might last longer; while from the Chinaman of whom he has only a temporary use, he merely thinks of getting the greatest possible amount of work in a given time, without troubling himself about the future.

Though I can only collect these particulars from hearsay, I can at least gather some idea of the sixty odd mutinies which have stained the emigrants' ships with blood, from an account of the wreck of the 'Martha,' published at Hong Kong last January. The coolies showed such despair at losing sight of the coast of China that it was thought necessary to confine them in the hold, one in twenty being taken as a hostage, and lashed to the cross-trees. At night, for fear of a rising, the deck was strewn with sharp iron spikes intended to run into their bare feet, and so prevent a rush being made. They broke through the hatchways, however, killed ten men, bound the others, and then worked the ship so badly that five days later they were wrecked, and half of them drowned; two sailors only were saved to relate this tragedy, which makes one's blood run cold with horror! If such has been the state of things, if from 1848 to 1856 the local authorities shut their eyes to this disgraceful traffic, it is but fair to say that since the latter date the Portuguese Government has taken upon itself the superintendence of what had been till then only confusion and cruelty even before the start. After many inquiries, this is what I have been able to gather concerning the present condition of the coolies, as considered from the starting-point: accidents and mutinies at sea are, of course, beyond the Portuguese jurisdiction, and are none the less numerous for such slight efforts. Besides, if the examination of the Barracons tend to prove that the coolies go on board these infamous

vessels *free*, it is none the less true that they land at Cuba or the guano islands as *slaves*!

Every year about 5000 Chinese leave Macao for Havannah, and 8000 for Callao Certes; and if this emigration were conducted by honest and disinterested officials, it would be an immense benefit both to the country that is short of provisions, and that which is short of labourers, and we should hail with the liveliest sympathy the vessels which carry off the surplus of the most prolific population in the world, from this country whose soil is not everywhere fertile, and which is far from sufficing to feed all the dwellers on it. But to this end it would be necessary that the principal agents should no longer be the hordes of plunderers, pirates, and kidnappers, who have left a stain on the undertaking which nothing can efface. The root of the evil lies in this recruiting system, and it is idle to ask afterwards in Macao from these thousands of coolies whether they go of their own free will or not; of what value is their affirmative answer? Once seized in the clutches of the agents, their creditors, once within the offices of the Barracon by means of the commission agents, who receive 30s. or 40s. per head for recruits, once delivered over by an agreement signed between the contractors and the Imperial mandarins whose assistance has been won by a bonus, the wretched creatures must needs lie boldly when the Portuguese inspector calls upon them to signify their consent, yes or no! They know that if they refuse to go the three interested parties—creditors, commission agents, and mandarins—will

pursue them with all the horrors of the most implacable revenge; hunted down and persecuted, dying of hunger and fear, they will fall back almost necessarily under their hateful yoke and cruel blows.

After the first infamous capture by subaltern agents, this is how the trade is carried on! The commission agent in the human traffic receives, per head of Chinamen delivered, 2*l.* for himself and about 12*l.* for the seller. The half-black Portuguese, who showed us over his warehouse, has now got a hundred picked up by his commercial travellers in Canton, the Kwang-Tong, the Kwang-Se, and the Hou-Nan, at an outlay of 1200*l.* The man himself has completely the look of a slave dealer: he is fat, oily, short and stumpy, with a flat nose, a wild eye, a dirty beard, and in his hand a slave whip—need I say more! Before trading (the word is only too true) with a ship's captain,—before stowing into the hold his living cargo, the owner of a Barracon must submit his coolies to the inspection of the Portuguese "procurador." At this stage begins Government action, and the present arrangements begin to bear fruit, while crime brings its own punishment; for it is found that fraud and violence, which seemed at first to be a means of greatly economising the expense and increasing the gain of the recruiting agents, have become, thanks to the new law, the actual cause of the increase of outlay and diminution of returns. Out of a thousand Chinamen examined by the colonial judge, and given their choice of returning to China or setting sail for Havannah, there are often

as many as 200 who have courage enough to refuse, and risk the revenge of the Barracon owners; if the creditors who have bought them, conveyed them here, and fed them in the temporary sheds, do not exercise the most terrible retaliation, all the expense incurred for these so-called deserters is thrown away.

The human cargo, who have consented before the judges to go, are then returned to the Barracon. The new law forbids their leaving it within six days, during which time the procurador appears again, and says to the coolies: "Make up your minds; you are still free!" Often they have to wait a month or two before a ship sails, and during this delay they must pronounce the fatal *yes twice again* before embarking, that there may be no question about their consent.

Although the local authorities deserve high praise for their careful inspection and inquiry during the delay before sailing, it must be allowed that the longer the coolie remains in the hands of the trader the less power he has of drawing back. For he is a pauper and a bankrupt! To what cruelties would he not expose himself if he refused to go, when he has been lodged and boarded for two months at the contractor's cost? Turning in a vicious circle, if he refuses to speak as a free man, he must, to pay his debts, constitute himself this contractor's slave!

At last the vessel is laden, and is about to weigh anchor, the decisive moment approaches! and on the eve of sailing, the contract is signed before the procurador. The coolies are embarked, and each is then

sold by the proprietor of the Barracon to the representative of the Spanish navigation agency for about 30*l*. By dint of pestering all our companions with questions, we obtained, as a tit bit, a specimen of the celebrated bargain. It is drawn up in Spanish and in Chinese, and signed and sealed by the Chinese recruit, the procurador, and the Spanish consul. The following are the principal clauses:—

“I undertake to work twelve hours a day, for eight years, in the service of the holder of this contract, and to renounce all freedom during this time. My employer undertakes to feed me, and to give me four piastres (1*l*s.) a month, to clothe me and set me free on the day of the expiration of this contract.”

How very fine the arrangements look on paper! But does not this man become in fact for eight years a mere beast of burden to the planter? And is it not easy to understand how suicide, as I was told the other day in Hongkong, is the final remedy for all these miseries! But a more horrible death often awaits them, and I still remember the deep impression made upon me by a story told by M. Vanéechout in the ‘*Revue des Deux Mondes*.’ I will give it to you in a few words. In extracting guano from the Chincha Islands, the stuff is thrown by windsails direct from the top of the rock into the hold of the ship, a distance of a hundred yards. He saw a wretched Chinaman carried away with his load of guano down the narrow tube, and dashed to pieces at the bottom. Similar accidents are very common. But I have been so taken

up with the slave labours of these poor creatures, that I had forgotten to finish my account of the mercantile transaction. I return to it.

Except at Canton, where the Cuban agency in 1865-66 exported 2716 coolies, miserable, wretched, poor devils, it is not very easy to find captains and crews who will undertake the transport service; still the bait of an assured profit, a passage money of 20*l.* per "Celestial," tempts some captains to hazard their lives as much as if they staked them on a throw of the dice. After the horrors of a passage, where typhus fever, mutinies, and pistol-shots provide a new excitement each day, Cuba is at last reached, and the surviving Chinese are taken to the public square, the market for these human cattle! According to the season, the needs of the farmers, or the obstruction of trade, the "Sons of Heaven" are looking up or down like flour, coffee, or cattle. There is a good deal of speculation, consequently, on the arrivals; but the average quotations are at 350 dollars (70*l.*)! I doubt though if the account of the market of this noisy crowd would ever contain the proverbial formula: "Chinamen quiet to-day!" Thus between the den at Macao and the sugar-cane fields of Cuba, or the guano rocks, the coolie has risen in value from 12*l.* to 70*l.*, the difference being divided between all the agents, namely 2*l.* to the kidnapper, 16*l.* to the Barracon, 20*l.* to the captain, and 20*l.* for the seller at his destination!

My heart was painfully stirred, as I looked round upon these poor creatures, wan, ragged, and filthy, who

crouched on all sides on the boards of these kennels that they call Barracons! And yet I know that from this very terrace Don Osorio pointed out to us the roofs and gardens of some Chinamen who left here as coolies, twenty years ago, and have returned rich men! If they can resist fever, and twelve hours of forced labour, during eight years of slavery; if they get accustomed, as we are told, to guano and blows, I know that these hard-working people can enrich themselves subsequently, for free labour is highly paid. But how many have returned rich, out of the thousands whom smuggling, piracy, and gilded baits have stowed into these poisonous holds? If these coolie agencies are amongst the most lucrative speculations of the nineteenth century, producing a profit of about 56% per head, I still cannot look upon these "gentlemen" as anything but pirates disguised as clerks; and I seem still to hear the horrid sharp blows which I saw falling on the shoulders of men who are sold in squads, coming and going like flocks of sheep on their way to the fields or the slaughter-house!

From the bottom of my heart I congratulate the English colony of Hongkong for having, in one of its first edicts, prohibited *coolie emigration* in its territory, or within its waters. They felt the necessity of stigmatizing the hideous frauds and artfully concealed extortions which necessarily ensue from the trade in China, even more than the sufferings which await them in their new country. The situation of Macao, this leech applied to the huge Chinese empire, is delicate;

this amphibious settlement has never been very clearly defined in its organic elements, as I hope to be able to tell you more fully to-morrow when I enter upon its history. Neither altogether Chinese, nor altogether Portuguese, neither Christian nor Buddhist; hesitating between the Portuguese governors and the tenacious mandarins, between whom a constant struggle is kept up; sometimes acting according to our European policy in the extreme East, sometimes intimidated and kept in order by menaces from Canton or Peking, Macao has only acquired a firm footing since the efforts of the gallant Ferreira do Amaral; but the corrupt basis of its bastard origin is not to be swept away at one blow. The Barracoons were undoubtedly at first merely depôts for the Chinese traffic; the business might be called now simply an "involuntary emigration" of coolies. I sincerely trust that the time is not far distant when the Portuguese Government will honestly renounce all revenue that they draw from this trade, and imitate what Ireland has done for Australia. Once emigration is purged from all taint of speculation, let shipments go by hundreds, to be paid by Cuba and Callao, as they are paid by Sidney and Brisbane! Let them save from the wretchedness of poverty, hunger, and pillage the thousands of Chinese who are suffocating at home! Let them sell themselves, if they please, for eight years, for 70*l.* a head, but let themselves at least keep the money they are supposed to be worth! But no; free labour, the one thing that can regenerate the Asiatic world, will open to them a purer, nobler, more

encouraging career, and their standard of morality will be raised in proportion as they escape from the Barracons, the vilest, most pernicious speculation that I know.

We had not been five minutes out of the Barracon, and were breathlessly climbing the "Calçada da Buenita Maria Virgem," a steep, slippery paved ascent, between two rows of hovels painted green, with prison gratings instead of windows, when we passed the procurador's sedan chair, to which a young Chinaman was clinging convulsively, with sobs and howls. We saluted His Excellency (all the world is excellency here, even myself), and I inquired the cause of the torrent of tears of his unhappy petitioner, who wore round his neck a wooden label marked with a large number. Don ——— was returning in full uniform from the town hall, where he had signed the papers of 700 coolies who are to start to-morrow. But, according to law, he had rejected this poor Chinaman's "bargain," his young tail not yet numbering eighteen years! The rejected candidate persisted in grovelling at the judge's feet, and his words were translated to us: "he entreated to be allowed to go; for if he was returned to the agent who had bought him, he caused him to lose all his profits, and so exposed himself to the most cruel treatment." Poor fellow, he was wild with despair at being stopped on the point of starting for a new Eldorado—of guano!

14th February, 1867.—At six o'clock this morning we went on board the 'Principe Carlos,' a beautiful

gunboat, lent by the Governor of Macao to the Prince, to take him to Canton. We skirted the rocky bays of the peninsula, and gradually the Praye Grande, the Guia fort, where the first lighthouse in the China seas was erected, the Monte and the battlements of the fortifications, are lost in the dim horizon, and we bade farewell to this colony, the last European outpost we shall see before the Celestial Empire itself. Macao was the first beacon planted on the outskirts of China by the western navigators, and its history is consequently connected with all the struggles between Europe and the great Asiatic power. A Portuguese, Perestrello, was the first to land in the Canton river in 1516. For forty years, his countrymen, attracted by the treasures, unknown till then, of the commercial resources of the empire, continued their endeavours to establish some humble factories; but from Ningpo in the north, to the mouth of the Canton river in the south, they were successively defeated, and driven back by the native tribes, or the decrees of the mandarins, as a ship beaten by the storm strikes against the breakers of a rocky coast, without being able to make land anywhere. Although by their pacific proclamations, and the small naval force at their disposal, they plainly showed that their only object was to create a trading station profitable to both nations, they were everywhere expelled as if they had been plague-stricken. Having at last obtained the right of anchorage under the lee of the islands of Schang-Chwan and Lam-pa-cau, permission was given them in 1557 to

build a factory on a desert rock, lost at the far end of an island. In a few years they had fortified it so thoroughly, that the mandarins could no longer drive them out: Macao was established. In future, for more than two centuries and a half, this factory continued to be a mixture of Chinese and Portuguese, divided between the authority of the mandarins and that of a local senate. A curious assemblage of two opposing forces, levying taxes in common, keeping watch upon one another, and endeavouring to establish a political balance, similar to the commercial exchange of which Macao was the intermediary between the Chinese Empire and the rest of the world. Often, however, the European flag was forced to be lowered before the yellow dragon, and the local "Senado," composed of two "juizes," three "vercadores," and a "procurador," all elected by the community, was obliged to submit both in theory and fact to the yoke of the mandarins, and give up to them their most precious privileges,—jurisdiction over their Portuguese subjects, and the prohibition of the conversion of Chinese to Christianity.

It seems that in this marriage of the Asiatic power with the Catholic colony, the submissive part of the wife has been imposed upon the latter, and of a wife often ill-used by her lord. Twice, in 1802 and in 1808, when the English East India Company's troops landed at Macao, to protect this outpost against the possibility of a French attack, the mandarins interposed, and forced the Portuguese to drive away their own allies. And in 1839, when the Imperial Commissioner Lin

demolished the factories, and all the European traders in Canton sought refuge at Macao, Lin pursued them with an army of two thousand men, and by threatening the town obtained an order that all English subjects should embark at once. They were obliged to yield, and escape to the anchorage of Hongkong. But the result was the cession of this island by the Empire, insisted upon by the treaty which terminated the war. Finally, the closing of the Portuguese custom-house in 1849, not being followed by that of the Chinese custom-house, the dispute that ensued was ended by the murder of the Governor. This crime broke the barrier which till then had confined the two currents flowing side by side, but so violent in their nature that the first storm would inundate everything. As great as had been the respect paid to party rights till now in the Chino-Portuguese factory, so strong, politically speaking, was the era of vengeance and independence opening to the colony, after two hundred and ninety-two years of constraint, intimidation, and subjection. Since 1849 then, the royal Governors, backed by an elected Senate, rule here with full powers, build, sit in judgment and make laws, with no need to ask permission from the agents of the mandarins at Canton. There is but one drawback still, and that is that Portugal has never been the legal possessor of Macao, and that the Chinese were perhaps not so entirely in the wrong in claiming the lion's share of the Government. Between the permission to erect a factory, given in 1557, and the entire cession of the ground, is a barrier which the

cabinet of Pekin has allowed the Portuguese artillery to overcome in fact, but not in law, and Senhor Guimaraes looked very foolish when, in 1862, the Chinese plenipotentiaries roundly refused to ratify a treaty in which the sovereignty of Portugal over the old colony was implicitly recognised. Although the proposition was supported by the French minister at Pekin, China none the less protested the absolute nullity of the pretensions put forward. Thus, by one of the strange vicissitudes of the world, Portugal, who opened the Oriental route to the other commercial nations, is the only one whose flag flies here without the consent of the Chinese; while legally, and by right of treaty, England rules at Hongkong, and France and the United States joined with her at Shanghai, while Prussia even, it is said, has a strong inclination to obtain the complete cession of the magnificent island of Formosa.

But while the political independence of Macao, increasing step by step till 1849, is now reaching its zenith, the commercial prosperity of the colony suffers in inverse proportion. During the eighteenth century the whole south of China was disturbed by the flourishing trade of the East India Company, who, drawing supplies here as from a living source, or pouring in importations from Europe, made Macao the centre of exchange. The more unbearable Canton became from the vexatious treatment of the mandarins, the more Macao opened to European traders, and not only junks laden with merchandise flocked here by

thousands, but the town became a villa residence for the spendthrift nabobs of oriental traffic. What dreams were based then on this infinitesimally small spot, which had become a beacon in the China Seas, attracting vessels from the furthest ends of the world to discharge and warehouse their cargoes here, and then send them out again, like the diverging rays of a centre of light, towards far distant shores, with the produce, always in such demand, of the Chinese Empire.

But in one day all these brilliant castles crumbled away; it only needed that, thanks to the wonderful activity and capital of Great Britain, another barren rock called Hongkong should, in 1841, be ceded to the Queen of the Seas, and declared a free port, for the centre of gravity to be displaced. The birth of this British colony was a death-blow to the old Portuguese factory, and there are here now lying on their anchors only some old blackened hulks of vessels used in the coolie trade.

Macao contains about 125,000 Chinese, and 2000 Portuguese. In 1865 it registered only 206 vessels clearing the harbour, against the 1000 of thirty years back. Its trade resolves itself almost into the importation of 7500 chests of opium, worth 652,000*l.*, and the exportation of tea to the value of 136,000*l.* As you may easily imagine, the imposts all fall upon the Chinese, inhabitants, and, according to the fatal rule of Asiatic nations, it is by taxing their vices that the largest profit is made. More than 100,000 piastres (20,000*l.*) is drawn from the gambling licenses; more

than 12,000*l.* from opium and the Barracons, and this is no small sum in a budget of receipts of only 47,500*l.* As regards expenses, thanks to the insignificance of the place, and the smallness of the salaries,¹ they only amount to 38,900*l.* The 8600*l.* of surplus flow into the coffers of the mother country, where according to all accounts there is plenty of room for them.

There is a most curious and picturesque appearance about this old factory, which has seen its days of greatness, with the navies of Diaz, of Vasco de Gama, and Albuquerque. It represents the old world and the Latin race, beside the financial energy of the Anglo-Americans of the East; and the Canton river, flowing from China proper, passes at its mouth between these two opposing sentries. If the one is flourishing now, it must not be forgotten that to the other is owing the opening of China to our trade. One sowed in trouble, for the other to reap in prosperity.

From comparing these three colonies of Singapore, Hongkong, and Macao, a belt of skirmishers which we have placed round the outskirts of China, I pass naturally to considering the migrations, in an opposite direction, of these busy bees the Chinamen, as they spread themselves in invading swarms all round their hive. They have taken a bold flight, and there is not a country in the East, whether washed by the waves of the Indian, the Antarctic, or the Pacific Ocean, at whose shores they have not touched. We have seen

¹ 750*l.* for the governor, 460*l.* for the judge, 156*l.* for the colonel in command, and 120*l.* for the procurador.

them hastening to the gold mines of Australia, and we know that they have flocked to those in California. We have seen them as monopolists and usurers in Java, as clerks, useful to and liked by the whites in Singapore, energetic traders—and the only ones—at Siam. They greatly assist the Cochin-Chinese trade, are held in high esteem at Manilla, and find themselves in their element amongst the guano of the Chincha Islands, or under the planters of Cuba. An immense nation might be formed only of this people outside their own territory. Liked here, expelled there, useful on one side, noxious on the other, but always persevering in trade, which is life to him, the exported Chinaman always returns to his native land, but generally in his coffin, which has originated the saying in some of the countries to which he has emigrated, "We receive the Chinaman raw and live, and return him to his country manufactured and dead." For my part, having seen plenty of Celestials before setting foot in China,—having heard honest men praise the Chinese so highly, or abuse them so loudly, I have come to the conclusion that no positive theory can be constructed on the subject. Looking at them only as emigrants, I would compare them to a species of parasitic plant, beneficial or hurtful, according to the nature of the tree to which it attaches itself. Absorbing the sap if it is richer than its own, nourishing it if it is inferior. Is their object to take an equal place amongst a superior race? They suck up the riches for themselves alone, and are forced by their very nature to descend to its lowest

depths,—to work upon and exaggerate the vices which they can feed. Do they find themselves, on the contrary, amongst an indolent, degraded, and sluggish people? They excite them by their vivacity, regenerate them by intermarriage, stimulate them by the example of their industry; for above all things, abroad they are indefatigable workers, in the immediate neighbourhood of their own land pirates, and we shall presently see what they are in the home of their ancestors.

Before us, in fact, the classical soil of the Flowery Land opens to our view. Guided by an intelligent Chinese pilot, our gunboat winds between hundreds of rocky islands, bamboo stockades, and fleets of fishing junks, which enliven the fine effect of the mouth of the Canton river. But as we are now in midwinter there are no flowers, and scattered tombs, cut in amphitheatres in the granite rocks, are the only break on the barren sides of the hills which shut in the stream. To right and left the rocky heights are crowned with dismantled fortresses, vestiges of the former power and recent humiliation of the Empire. We pass Hu-mun (or Boca tigris), Anung-hoy, Wantong, and Ticok-tao, whose ruins attest the formidable defences destroyed by our guns in 1839 and in 1856. When we saw, in the numerous canals which join the river, the interminable files of junks, like shoals of herrings, we thought what dreadful havoc our great cannon balls and bombs might make in such a forest of masts. Our shots to-day were less ambitious and more humane, for we contented ourselves with firing small shot into the

immense flocks of wild ducks, that reminded us of those in Australia.

After passing the "Tiger's jaw," the celebrated Dardanelles of Canton, we came in sight of the beautiful English clippers, peacefully anchored together on this magnificent river, then of the mercantile docks of Whampoa, and at half-past nine in the evening, by a dim moonlight, we entered the floating city of Canton. Millions of coloured paper lanterns, illuminated to right and left, over a space of some four or five miles, this nautical town, the most populous in the world. As they are mirrored in the quivering waves, each one lighting up a floating habitation, these lights reminded me of the magical effect of the swarms of fireflies in the scenes of Java. A night arrival at Canton by water is like landing in an aquarium, where men, women, lanterns, and boats are crowded together, and one is entangled in a labyrinth of vessels lying at anchor, and forming an amphibious city. The effect is the most unreal and dreamlike. Was there not a populous town near the Styx? This frightful concert of tom-toms and innumerable crackers really makes one expect some diabolical appearance. I am so impressed by our nocturnal entry into the floating city of Canton, with a forest of masts illuminated by blue lights, and the tops of the denticulated roofs of the pagodas for the horizon, that I fear to see the town by daylight deprived of its most striking peculiarity. Lanterns here must be more effective than the sun.

Anchoring by the little island of Sha-Myen, a small

European establishment, we knocked at several doors, looking for shelter, and at last were billeted for the night at the English vice-consul's. The consul himself would have offered us hospitality, but his yamoun (residence) is in the centre of the town, and the gates of the ramparts have been barricaded since sunset.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CANTON.

Pawnbrokers — The tempter serpent — The village of age and the village of the dead — Seven children exposed — The Street of Eternal Purity — The torture pagoda — The good deeds of the missionaries — The Viceroy's suite — First impressions of China.

15th February, 1867.—Thermometer at four degrees above freezing.

Canton stretches along the two shores of its broad river, and is composed of two towns, the floating town and the terrestrial. This morning the English consul, Mr. Robertson, came to fetch us, and his boat carried us rapidly right and left through the thousands of vessels inhabited by entire families. A roof of bamboos and dried leaves covers each of these boat-cottages; on the stern is the ancestral altar, illuminated by little perfumed torches, and twenty times in the day fireworks are let off from it. Here are flower boats, horticultural rafts, where behind distorted shrubs, or under a kind of greenhouse, imprisoned flowers and Chinese women vegetate together. These freshwater sirens have their cheeks painted carmine, and their eyebrows black, and look sleepy and indolent. But as soon as dusk falls it appears that the boat is lighted up, musical instruments begin to sound, and the rich Chinamen come here to amuse themselves

with drinking tea. Further on a forest of masts points out the station from which the junks start for the interior, through the canals which intersect all parts of the Empire, and five passengers' heads appearing at each porthole show the crowded state of these omnibus-boats. But the guns in the forecastle, intended for defence against the river pirates, are not calculated to reassure one as to this method of travelling.

The most curious thing, undoubtedly, is the little creek of Fort Fung-Kwang-Paotai, where the ducks, congregating in flocks of fifteen or twenty thousand, make even more noise than the Chinamen, which is no easy matter. Here each vessel, twice a day, lets down some screens which slope gently down to the water, like the platform of a drawbridge, and the ducks, to the number of about a thousand to each vessel, take their flight to paddle in the neighbouring pools. The shrill blast of a horn, blown by the proprietor of the birds, brings them all back to their nest, with wonderful docility, and every evening a good many are sold for the mandarins' dinner-parties. The eggs are hatched by artificial heat, in the village of Fati, not far from this creek. I can easily suppose that the hatching establishment is far better regulated than the entire police of the Empire.

The city on terra firma presents a most original appearance. The streets are only about a yard and a half wide, paved and slippery, and crowded with people. The first that we took was the fishmongers' street, where a slimy glue nearly made us fall at

each step. The next was the butchers,' at whose stalls hung bunches of dried rats, split and smoked like the Pomeranian geese, and dogs prepared for the table, whose tails only were adorned with a tuft of yellow hairs. A third contained immense silk warehouses; then came porcelains. But all these streets, like scenes on an Asiatic stage, have the same indescribable peculiarities. The flags are crowded by people in bright-coloured dresses, with pigtails and conical hats; mandarins in sky-blue silk are jostled against strings of blind men, who wind their way through the multitude, holding on to one another's dresses, filthy lepers, and wretched victims of elephantiasis crawling along the ground. Troops of muscular coolies hustle every one. But alas! for one well-dressed Chinaman that we saw we were saddened by the sight of two hundred crippled or starving creatures, dragging themselves along, destitute of clothing, and devoured by such swarms of vermin that they look like cockchafers on an oak-tree. Above the noisy throng thousands of scarlet boards marked with gilt letters are swaying in the wind. They are the shopkeepers' signs, or religious sentences.

We got perfectly bewildered by the constant motion of this human ant-hill, after a two hours' walk through these crowded thoroughfares, where a passage has to be made by strength of arm. Disgusted by the abominable smell of the yellow buckets carried under our noses, or the lepers who hung on to us and begged, devoured by the insects who deserted them in our favour, dazzled by the splendour of the shops, amazed at the wonderful

coolie traffic, and full of pity for a wretchedness that brings tears to one's eyes, we wanted to get a general idea of this great city, of which we had traversed thirty streets, without ever seeing more than ten paces before us. We ascended, therefore, a great wooden tower, where, after climbing up two hundred and fifty-three steps, we could command the curious mosaic of wooden houses and lanes crossing one another at right angles. Our tower was simply a pawnbroker's establishment; curiously enough, this is one of the oldest institutions of the Chinese Empire. Throughout the eight stories of this wooden edifice we saw, arranged in admirable order, thousands of little numbered packets; the Government has the superintendence of this benevolent institution, which is certainly the last thing I expected to find in the Asiatic empire:

The broad roof of blue tiles, which serves us for an observatory, looks as if it belonged to a chemist's shop. Hundreds of glazed earthenware pots are ranged along the edges, filled with vitriol, intended to be thrown in the eyes of any assailants. Some thirty lookout men besides, perched on scaffoldings similar to our tower, overlook this sea of low roofs and dirty lanes, not only to give the alarm in case of fire, but also to keep an eye upon the thieves who swarm here, more than anywhere else in the world. But such is the extent of Canton that we could not even yet distinguish the fortifications and gates. Two pagodas caught our eye, to which we next turned our steps, intending afterwards to reach a fortified hill rising to the north-east, whence

we hoped to secure a better bird's-eye view of this mass of humanity.

We descended into the town, and after an hour's walk through a dense throng arrived at the pagoda we were in search of; it is that of the tutelar deity of the north. As we entered it, one sight struck us more than the troops of bonzes, the noisy tom-toms, or painted Buddhas. It was a cluster of shrubs placed upon an altar, where dwells the sacred serpent, whose worshippers come daily to feed and adore him. In the Chinese legend also the serpent's head is crushed by a woman; but the spirit of this Christian tradition has been entirely reversed by the Chinese. Instead of honouring the woman, they sacrifice to the tempter. We had already seen in Java, Singapore, and Siam the offerings made by the Buddhists to malevolent demons and evil genii, and had learned that when they beat their tom-toms with all their strength, on board ship, it is to drive away the spirit of darkness. Their great maxim is this, "Not to trouble oneself about the benevolent divinity, because that is in its nature good, but to appease the evil one, who may do harm."

Before our eyes, therefore, the worshippers crowded round the bushes, and turning their backs to a painting representing a goddess crushing the reptile, they presented their offerings to the odious brute, who seemed to be about two feet long, lying coiled round the hot embers. At the entrance door we saw the urn over which a cock's head is cut off when an oath is taken. It is a symbol: "May my head be cut off like the

cock's, in eternity, if I perjure myself." We laughed heartily at this custom, which is artfully encouraged by the bonzes; for after all, it is the cocks who pay the cost of public worship, to the great satisfaction of the priests, who eat them with much content every evening.

The walls of this pagoda, painted in grotesque frescoes, are adorned with large gilt placards, on which are written the names and titles of the gods, and of men honoured by the Emperor in virtue of some memorable deed. Each sovereign, on his accession to the Empire, raises them a step in this progressive canonization, and we were shown one god who has recently been promoted six degrees above the others. It was under his protection that the Chinese put themselves on the day when they so terribly defeated the English at the Taku forts, in the entrance of the Peiho river. Below this one three names were erased. The Viceroy of Canton, defeated last month by the rebel troops, has degraded the gods who would not listen to him.

When we climbed to the roof of the pagoda, the consul pointed out to us a flotilla moored at a little distance. The preponderance of junks over masts, and bullet-holes over port-holes, is accounted for by the Imperial troops having returned thus a week ago, leaving a thousand men dead on the field of battle. A neighbouring district had flatly refused to pay the taxes, and then vigorously resisted the Viceroy.

The second pagoda that we visited was that of the

five hundred gods. They are represented by statues three feet high, rivalling each other in grotesqueness. I should not mention this temple, which, like all Chinese pagodas, is excessively wearisome, except to express my astonishment at seeing Buddhist saints wearing the mitre, cross, and rosary, the fact of politeness requiring us to keep our hats on, and the sight of pigs roasted whole, brought by the faithful as a sacrifice to Buddha, and cut up and devoured by the bonzes on the spot.

Resuming our march, we turned at last straight to the north, wishing to have a good view of the populous city, in whose streets we had as yet found only a stifling crowd. We climbed the ladders leading to the summit of the famous five-storied pagoda, which is in the centre of a group of twelve forts, and rises above the whole town at the north end. It is really a very imposing edifice, with its woodwork painted dark-red. No trace remains in it now of Buddhist worship, but on the walls are ridiculous inscriptions and military caricatures, left by the allied troops after the occupation, from 1858 to 1861. From its summit we could clearly discern the rounded triangle formed by the old terrestrial town, with its walls more than fifteen miles long, its sixteen gates with their curious bastions, its pagodas, its mosques, and its "yamouns."¹ To our left was the breach by which the allies advanced to the attack in 1857. On one side shaded by poplars, at the very foot of the wall, is the burial-place of our brave soldiers

¹ A mandarin's palace surrounded with pleasure-grounds and barracks.

who were killed in the war. Hard by is the temple of the five spirits, and a kiosk open to all the winds, in which an immense bell is hung. Some well-pointed cannon balls have scratched the bronze, and we were told that this bell, cast two hundred years ago, had been rung three times, after which the bonzes condemned it to silence, prophesying that the fourth time would sound the ruin of the old city. It seems that at the bombardment of Canton, in 1857, the commanders of the gunboats vied with one another, not as usual as to who should knock down the fortifications, but as to who should ring the bell. The balls soon did their work, and two days later Canton was invested.

When one arrives in a distant city one is feverishly eager to take note of all its salient points and winding turns. But I will spare you the account of all but one field apparently desolate and lifeless amidst these closely-packed buildings; it is the site of the old factories, the ruins of the commercial glories of Canton.

Wishing to preserve this general impression, and preferring Canton seen from above and at a distance, to the stinking alleys where lepers jostle against one, we asked our companions to show us the road to the outer country. For about a mile and a half we continued along the top of the wall, which is seven or eight yards wide; at each embrasure is a gun, covered with a roof of wood and leaves, and we were told that there were some two thousand disposed in this way round the town. But a good many of them are of stone, and taking them altogether, I think if these ragged soldiers

who are mounting guard so proudly over their venerable pieces, were to fire them all, they would do a good deal more harm to the besieged than to the besiegers.

Passing through the east gate, we advanced into a country which seemed the very abomination of desolation; where ill-made roads wind amongst bare rocky hills, pools of stagnant water, and heaps of garbage, while all around scattered tombs make the view still more melancholy. Presently we arrived at a fortified enclosure, with ponds and sacred birds within it; we crossed the threshold, and found a row of some six hundred little houses before us. It was an asylum for old men, founded by the Chinese Government. All these wrecks, these living skeletons, to the number of a thousand, were ensconced in their gloomy huts, where they sleep beside the open coffin waiting to receive them. Some more active employed the leisure of their remains of life in carving with their trembling fingers arabesques to ornament the box where to-morrow they may rest. These stoical people have no fear of death.

Close by is the city of the dead; a square-built town, through the lanes of which we easily made our way. Each granite house is lighted by a funeral lamp. There are nine hundred and fifty inhabitants here, but only three living beings, the keepers. For a payment of twelve shillings a month the coffins are deposited in this place till the family of the deceased can provide the funds or the means of transport necessary to restore the remains to the north or centre of China. I admire

the ease with which families can obtain the consolation of reuniting in the place of their birth the scattered members whom death has struck down at a distance.

“ Ut jungat eosdem
Quos junxit communis amor, commune sepulcrum.”

The devotion of the Chinese to the dead has in it something touching, strongly contrasted with their well-known cruelty, their tortures and oppressions of the living. How costly our European formalities in such cases appear, compared with Chinese customs; for there are here also some five hundred coffins unpaid for, and yet which will be sheltered for a month.

We went through this necropolis from end to end, amidst offerings of flowers, the fumes of incense and resinous torches. The effect of the silence, the funereal lights, the inanimate inhabitants was very impressive, and one could not but ask oneself, “Is it a reality or only a dream?”

If it is a dream, it is certainly not a cheerful one. But China really seems to exist only to do homage to the dead; it is the characteristic mark of the nation. The lamps which burn night and day in the boats, the fireworks let off in front of every house at sunrise and sunset, the altars lighted up before each shop, are all the expression of the veneration of the people for their fathers. Perhaps this respect for the past is the key to their opposition to all innovation. It may be that when they bury their ancestors in their kitchen-garden, as we see done on all sides, they vow to imitate them in all points, so that one original type should remain

the model of all succeeding generations in the Celestial Empire.

But we must leave the city of the dead; the sun was setting, and to return to our dwelling we had to cross the city of the living, whose gates are shut at night, and there would be small pleasure in finding oneself benighted on this side. We retraced our steps therefore, passing by the tomb of one Ming, a Tartar general who subjugated Canton some centuries ago, and whose remains are guarded by lions, camels, and warriors, carved in the granite rock.

Suddenly, as we were hastening along the muddy lonely path which skirted the earth walls of a little village almost in ruins, we saw three paces from us, lying in the grass beaten down by the frost, a little basket made of matting with the opening sewed up; something seemed to move inside it; we cut open the coarse stuff with a knife, and found a poor little naked creature, frozen and blue with cold, about twenty-four hours old; as soon as the light fell upon it, it set up a plaintive wail; in another moment this was answered by fresh cries coming from a neighbouring bush, where another infant was struggling in its death agony. This one had apparently been thrown over the wall, for it seemed to have its bones broken. We soon found, within a space of five hundred yards alongside of this path, *seven* dying children only a few hours old; some were attacked with leprosy, others almost completely frozen; one had been stabbed in the side with a knife. I cannot describe our feelings of pity, our sorrow and

anger at sight of these children lying here so bruised or frozen, that no care could have restored them to life. Seven, in less than half a mile—is not the sight too horrible and heart-rending? During our first day in China, chance made us witnesses of this example of the most frightful cruelty; we searched still further amongst the rubbish, but could not discover one of these little creatures that there was any chance of saving; from one blood was flowing, another had its feeble limbs frozen by the cold, a third with the death-rattle in its throat vomited the poison given to it; but the tom-toms from the fortifications warned us that we must run if we did not wish to have our retreat cut off; and with heavy hearts we hastened our steps, and in an hour's time arrived at the European settlement, Sha-Myen.

I must frankly confess, and apologise to the missionaries for the fact, that I had never really believed in the exposure of Chinese infants! I had said to myself that, as the very wild beasts cherish their little ones, there could not be a country in the world where it was the custom to abandon children. There might be isolated crimes, infanticides such as occur in our own great towns; but these I thought must be, as with us, the melancholy result of human passions and human misery: in my ignorance I thought it a mere Chinese police question, made known and exaggerated in Europe by the letters from China, which were still further improved upon on their arrival. Now that, like Thomas, I have seen the wound, I bow my head and own myself convinced. All my life I shall preserve the memory

of these seven children thrown out to die, at the gate of the first Chinese town that we visited, seven children discovered in our first walk taken at hazard in the country round Canton. I can no longer be surprised at the number of twenty or twenty-five thousand at which, if I remember rightly the 'Annals of the Propagation of the Faith' estimate the number of children exposed annually in the large towns of China.

From these melancholy statistics, and from what one hour to-day has sufficed to show us, what other conclusion can we come to, than that the exposure of children is really a national custom, and that to a Chinese mother, who must have a stone in the place of her heart, there is nothing in the least revolting in the abandonment of her children, whether to sale or murder? It remains to be seen how far this usage—since it is one—is practised with impunity amongst the Chinese, and we shall certainly discover if the mandarins shut their eyes to the matter, or if they do not, at least morally, condemn the guilty mothers. With this painful impression ended our day's excursion, and we passed the evening talking over these sad things, and writing round the fire of our amiable host, Mr. Hancock.

At Canton there is nothing resembling an hotel, a caravanserai, or any sort of public lodging for a traveller. The European merchants lodge the tourists who bring them letters of introduction, and the Governor of Hongkong has been good enough to recommend us to this gentleman. In general he lives alone in his bungalow, passing his mornings in studying hundreds

of different teas ; he is tea-taster to Gibb's house, and he showed us his laboratory, where each pinch of the precious vegetable is divided in equal weights, amongst different degrees of hot water, and where each decoction of tea, coming from different plantations, is gravely sipped by him, and afterwards minutely and learnedly classified. On the taste of our host depends the sale of thousands of chests, and the profit of some hundred thousands for Gibb, Gibb, & Co.

After the turmoil of the day we hear nothing now in our peaceful dwelling, except the dull sound of two sticks struck one against the other by our host's night watchman. Sha-Myen, the island upon which we are living, was ten years ago a mudbank, at high-tide under water, and a resort for pelicans, dead bodies drifting down the stream, and all kinds of horrors. After the taking of Canton in 1857, the traders, who were anxious to resume their formerly flourishing business, were in despair at finding only ruins where their factories had been, and endeavoured to rebuild them. But the allied plenipotentiaries preferred to convert this bank into an artificial island, and granite quays were accordingly constructed, to enclose in an oval shape the concession which measures 2850 feet in length, and 950 in width ; the whole cost was 325,000 dollars, of which one-fifth was paid by France and the other four-fifths by England. On September 3rd, 1861, the ground was put up to sale, and the English merchants were so eager, that the lots—of only 12,000 square feet—went up to 9000 dollars. Within six years there had sprung up

a small English town, a Protestant church, a cricket-ground, a race course, spacious villas, and magnificent godowns for the great China tea-houses. A path only separates the British from the French territory. On our land there are clumps of trees growing wild, rubbish heaps, stray dogs, cats, moles, and not one house!

For our part we were too happy to have found an asylum, and have still to thank our companions of to-day; in the morning the English Consul; at midday for the centre of the town, Dr. Grey, and, finally, in the country, Mr. Hancock. Dr. Grey, who is thoroughly acquainted with China, acted as guide here two years ago to H.R.H. the Duke of Brabant. At Hong-kong, as here, all were fascinated by this Prince, the first traveller of royal blood who had visited the Chinese Empire. All told us with what eagerness, intelligence, and amiability he sought out during his journey everything that could interest a noble mind. He hoped to extend his investigations still further, when bad news of the health of King Leopold I., suddenly recalled him to his own country, where, bringing with him the fruits of his study of distant nations, he was destined, after the accomplishment of a great journey, to commence a great reign.

February 16th, 1867.—We resumed our excursions, and guided by a Chinese servant, whose office was to lead us back to Sha-Myen, as soon as we pronounced the name, explored the heart of the city, which is a per-

fect labyrinth. However, we had studied beforehand the plan of the city, and had found some long straight thoroughfares, which served as landmarks: these were the streets of "Immaculate Righteousness" (the boulevard Haussman of Canton), of "Eternal Purity" (corresponding to the boulevard de la Madeleine), of "Benevolence and Love for the People" (boulevard de Sebastopol)! In short the most solemn and abstract of moral sentiments are given as names by the Chinese to their dirty flagged passages, and it is amusing to see the inscriptions placed above them, during the allied occupations, by French or Irish wags: the Chinese streets of "Farseeing Wisdom," of "Reasonable Virginity," of "Love," and "Hope," have been re-baptized—"Opera Lane, Mère-Michel, Sergeant-Isidore, and Pigtail Street!"

But our gaiety is soon over as we enter the prison courts, where hundreds of wretched creatures are crowded together in bamboo cages a few yards square! Shivering and nearly naked, sunk to the knees in fetid mire, with faces and bodies wan from hunger, blows, and wounds, they await in this pound the sword of the executioners! Some threw themselves on the coins we gave them through the bars of their den; others turned and twisted themselves, feverishly stretching out their arms, like wild beasts struggling and starving in their cages. Close by is the torture pagoda, where the most frightful instruments are ranged, in gradations of suffering. The "cangue" and laths for flogging till the blood runs, are pleasures compared to the little appa-

ratus I will mention to you. Five wooden rods, eight inches long, are placed between the fingers of each hand and the toes of each foot, and tied tightly on either side, so that the joints are forcibly compressed. The accused is placed on his knees, and fastened to a stake; then with cords some yards long the rods are sharply and repeatedly pulled, so that each time the joints are cracked, painfully stretched, and almost torn asunder. Here a poor wretch can be lifted from the ground by a simple rope passed over a pulley, one hand and foot alone being fastened, the head and rest of the body left swinging. In another, the culprit is put into a cage, and his hands tied behind him: the upper part of the cage is composed of two planks furnished with iron spikes, which are brought together so as to enclose the victim's neck without allowing his head to slip through; the planks are then raised just high enough not to hang the man if he stands on the tips of his toes. The moment the overstrained feet give way, he remains suspended by the neck and lacerated by the spikes, so that he must keep perpetually in motion, alternating for support between the extreme tips of his feet and his jaw-bones! Then came pincers for tearing out the nails and eyes; curry-combs with ten razor-blades to scrape the skin, and cut it to the depth of a fifth of an inch; oil flasks, like our mechanic's flasks, to pour boiling oil into these cuts; the pale, on which a man is made to revolve like a top: in short, a hundred different apparatus, one more refined than another, intended to extort confessions from the accused. Often the latter

die after twelve hours of agony! The moment they confess they are condemned; the dilemma is awkward, and ends in death whenever the executioners are not merely making use of the torture for pecuniary extortion. The agonized sufferer in that case makes his friends bring all the money he possesses; and if the inquisitors declare themselves satisfied, he is set at liberty!

I was so disgusted and upset by this torture house that I cannot enter into any more details! I do not believe there can be in the world anything more atrocious than the judicial cruelties of the Celestial Empire, and I felt that I could not endure for another moment such a laboratory of suffering and pain. Two great galleries overlook the building, containing a dozen divinities supposed to be propitious to the victims: we made our way with great difficulty through the thousands of worshippers burning tapers and incense, and offering chickens and pigs to the idols, that their friends who were now writhing under the blows, on the iron spikes, or beneath the pincers of their questioners, may escape death!

We hastened away from this accursed spot, and gained the upper town, where we knew the foreign missions were situated. There in a humble wooden hut, almost in ruins, we were received by Monseigneur Guillemain, the bishop of Canton. This venerable prelate resembles in person St. Vincent de Paul, and his gentle and impressive speech, in our own tongue, won our hearts immediately. Accompanied by Father

Guérin, whose health has been broken by his missionary labours in the unhealthy country in the interior, and by Father Bernon, who was a soldier before he became an apostle, and who still retains the charming characteristics of our army, Monseigneur Guillemin showed us the foundations of the cathedral he is building, and which will be the most beautiful Christian edifice in China. What a contrast between the poor and humble abode of the servant of God, and the holy temple he is raising, between the Christian Cross and the site wrested from barbarism! On this very spot was the palace of the famous Governor Yeh. The execrated memory of this cruel man, who cut off so many heads, and delighted in the most sanguinary despotisms, will be blotted out here by the benefits of the missions which comfort the afflicted and protect the suffering. On the 25th January, 1861, this ground was ceded in perpetuity by the Viceroy Laon to Monseigneur Guillemin for the purposes of the Catholic worship. This plot, which is 300 yards long by 140 yards wide, is enclosed within walls: it is the holy citadel whence the missionaries carry their blessings into the provinces of Kwang-Tong and Kwang-Si. But funds are still wanting to make these ruins such a centre of good deeds as the Mission dreams of.

Already, however, it offers a remedy for many sufferings. Monseigneur Guillemin, taking us straight to the end of the enclosure, opened the door of a square house, and we entered a large hall, superintended by a sister of charity, where we could not at first understand

the meaning of twenty wooden troughs, over which were spread coarse, dark-coloured, coverings. When the sister raised these, we saw more than 250 little children lying there in rows, one beside the other; it was the week's harvest! Some looked lively, but the greater number were livid; twelve or fifteen were at the point of death, four had just died! And while we stood there their lifeless bodies were carried off at once from amongst their brethren in misfortune; it went to our hearts to see these children lying together, in whose ranks death was already busily at work. Poor little innocents, who die almost as soon as they are born, and who might live if their infamous parents did not throw them out in the cold upon the stony roads! Worse still, it is said that the Chinese give them strong liquor to drink before exposing them to public charity, and this is what causes so many deaths!

Every morning the Christian Chinese women brought up by the Sisters, go out with a basket, and these "children gatherers" go through the lanes, in the suburbs, near bushes, walls, and waste-lands to pick up the poor little creatures whom they find least injured. At first the Chinese were very ready to sell their superfluous children; but they have since given up the practice, irritated at seeing other people bringing up those who should have been their special charge. But one curious fact was mentioned to us: on an average, of a hundred children abandoned, ninety are girls and only ten boys. If there were more funds to pay the "collectors," and to rear those whom they find, and,

above all, to increase the number of French sisters, hundreds of children would be received here daily; for the practice of exposure is extending its melancholy devastations, like a stain of oil. Moved generally by poverty, often by indolence, and always by a perverted morality, the most orderly and well-regulated families, if they appear to be too numerous, will rid themselves at once of the superfluous new-born infants.

After the melancholy impression made by the sight of these few saved from the great wreck, there is nothing more extraordinary to any one who can consider it in cold blood than the vagaries of this custom. In Kong-Teheou, before the last ravages of the rebels, the abandonment of children was almost unheard of. They were killed at home, Father Guérin told me, but never thrown out into the roads or fields. At Canton even, some quarters provide no recruits for the asylum, while others are constantly supplying it.

What a good and great work these Christian asylums have done in China! Now that I can speak of them from my own knowledge, I should like to show to those who disbelieve in the abandonment of Chinese infants, the humble abode built by Monseigneur Guillemin,—the troughs filled with children collected in one week, the four French sisters occupied in tending them night and day,—the halls crowded with those of the two last years,—the groups of children three and four years old playing in the court,—finally, the orphan adult schools for boys and girls who have grown up

under the protection of the Mission, and owe to it their life and education.

On the threshold of this enclosure, where Yeh formerly drew up lists of a hundred men to be decapitated in one night, there is now a register of entries kept by a French bishop for all the Chinese children whom he seeks to recall to life, and here are statistics stronger than my poor words, and which show the number received in the last twelve months.

In one year 4,483 children have been found abandoned, have been received, baptized, and cared for *here*. The search has cost 169*l.*, which makes about 8*d.* a head (the cost of a pound of wool in Australia). The staff employed within the asylum consists of 4 French sisters, 15 Chinese sisters, 30 orphan girls, and 7 servants. Including the maintenance and repairs of the house, the whole expenses under this head are 681*l.* For about the same sum, the bishop keeps up the boys' orphanage, where a hundred young Chinese are educated lodged and boarded, and where some twenty more are sheltered, for whose apprenticeship he pays. These lads, when they marry, take as wives the poor girls received in the same way as themselves, and settling in the neighbourhood of the church, form by degrees the nucleus of an honest and industrious population, attached to Europe, from whence come their benefactors, and loving their children, whom they will never abandon !

Such is the schedule of this charitable institution, of which we have been able to see the minutest details.

The work is in its infancy, it is true, for its allotted funds cannot nearly suffice. What thousands of lives might be saved here by suppressing three or four exhibitions of fire-works on our public holidays! Add to this the thirty-six schools scattered over the province, where four hundred children are educated, and five small orphan-ages, where a hundred are reared (at a cost altogether of about 440*l.*), and you will hardly know a twentieth part of the good done in China by the foreign missions.

17th February, 1867.—Our Sunday began as if we had been in France, by the bishop pronouncing the benediction in Latin from the altar; but it ended in true Chinese by the shouts of hundreds of children crying after us, "Fan qwai! fan qwai!" (devils and western dogs).

There are about eighteen thousand Christians in the whole province, of whom two thousand are at Canton. We found the latter kneeling on the ground in the open air, round the hut of dried leaves which does duty as a temporary chapel. Afterwards the bishop, who has already taken a strong liking to the prince, kept us to dinner, with nine missionaries from the neighbouring villages. We are here in a little corner of France; at our feet a gun presented by Admiral Jaurès recalls the war time, but to-day we think only of the peaceful victories of Christianity. How pleasantly the time passed with all these friendly people, and what curious and interesting adventures

every one had to relate. At Singapore I was distressed to see how poor the French trade is in the East, and how the tricoloured flag only appears as *rara avis in terris*; but to-day the general impression left on me is less despairing and more consolatory. Yes, England, the queen of the seas, is the material ruler of these Asiatic empires, by means of her enormous trade; she imports her cotton goods, and exports hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of teas and silks; but France is the country of ideas, and by means of her missionaries, she imports them into the most unknown regions of China. Let us give our hearty support to this inexhaustible and vivifying moral force, exalted by the purity and poverty of its agents, rendered illustrious by its martyrs, and confirmed by faith.

The relations of the missionaries and the mandarins vary considerably, according to place and circumstances; in one place there is perfect harmony, in another the priests are cruelly persecuted, less in their own persons than—what is worse to them—in that of their flocks.

But no such obstacles can arrest this Christian work, which continues unobtrusively to perform its admirable part—that of receiving friendless orphans, saving infants thrown out into the highways, and tending the sick who ask for help. The immense extent of each district obliges the missionary to be constantly on foot, and his ordinary pace is a forced march. Frequently summoned to a distance of fifty or sixty miles, he hastens thither, often sleeping on the bare ground,

oftener still exposed to insult; his chapels, scattered over the country, are merely bamboo huts. But he saps the foundations of polygamy, he undermines the barbarous custom of "little feet;" he turns some hearts to virtue, and raises his voice before the mandarins, and even at the Court of Peking, as the advocate of the unjustly oppressed poor man. As payment for such labours he receives a hundred and twenty piastres (24*l.*) a year; and you will not be surprised to hear that the income of the bishop of Canton (48*l.*), joined to that of all his missionaries, does not equal the lowest salary of the least of the ten or fifteen Protestant clergymen sent out by the Bible societies, who live very comfortably in their charming villas, without cares or flock. Since our arrival in China, indeed, we have not seen one English trader who does not deplore the well-paid inactivity of his clergy, who does not admire our poor but respected missionaries, those brave soldiers of the faith who attack, with French ardour, the ramparts of an ancient barbarism; they are the Zouaves of the church militant.

Night nearly overtook us in this wholesome French atmosphere, well calculated to impress those who were already beginning to suffer from home-sickness. But we returned to our lodging, reflecting that, in another year we should revisit our native land, and that our brave hosts of this morning have almost all courageously renounced theirs for life.

On our return to the Sha-Myen, we were soon stopped short in the very centre of the "Street of Love." A

running mob coming towards us jostled us brutally, and we were forced to seek refuge in a shop filled with stinking fish, and eggs preserved in uric acid. From thence we could observe the passage of the most grotesque procession; twenty men, mounted on zebra-striped ponies, rode one behind the other, shouting, "Hou-ouh, tou-ouh!" (Move on! move on!); and as the street is only a yard and a half wide, we had to move quickly to avoid having our toes trodden on by the horses' hoofs. These majestic horsemen carried in one hand a pike, while from the other waved a long horse's tail, to be used as a whip for their steeds (tails here answer all purposes, whether to beat dogs, women, or horses, or to be taken up to heaven by!) This troop, lengthened out like a string of beads, went headlong up and down the slippery steps which connect the different levels of a Chinese street. Then came a file of lictors, dressed in red, bearing whips, axes, swords, and chains; they were the executioners of Canton, the indispensable attendants of the local authorities. Next, a motley crowd of two hundred standard-bearers defiled before us; beggars in tattered clothes, repulsive from dirt and leprosy, they had donned for the occasion the government livery of gaudy rags. A mandarin's train is the best example of how splendour and vermin, magnificence and poverty, may be seen side by side in China; how fellows who at noon are vagabonds, in the afternoon become guards, and at night will sleep half naked on a dunghill! Finally, came a dozen chairs carried by eight bearers

each, close palanquins, lighted only by one small pane. The round fat face of the Governor of Kwang-Tong was pressed close to it to glare savagely at us, while the seventeen officers of his suite, wearing the Tartar moustache, showed themselves more openly to the people in their gay dresses embroidered in gold and silver.

We thought it civil to bow to these gentlemen, but their impassive faces showed us that they had no liking for Europeans; they remember too well the balls we fired into their pagodas ten years ago. After all, if that was our only way of civilising them, they would have a right to call us barbarians.

In contrast to the ferocious face of his Excellency's headsmen, the filthy troop of hired attendants, and the majesty of decay in the viceregal suite, the coquettish celestial maidens, with painted cheeks, plastered hair, and jade necklaces, are all leaning from their windows, and the "Street of Love" presents at this moment a true picture from a Chinese screen; mottoes painted in scarlet, richly-dressed mandarins, howling beggars, horses mounting staircases, painted women, motley-coloured palanquins, and shops, all jumbled together with the brilliant colouring of a porcelain painter's palette.

This quarter, however, has not always enjoyed such noisy gaiety. In a neighbouring street, some four hundred yards long, and closed at either end by gates, two of our French soldiers were killed in broad daylight in the open street, during the allied occupation. As soon as the commandant heard of the crime, without a moment's hesitation he closed the gates of the street,

and sent in two companies with orders to kill every one, excepting women and children. This necessary example prevented any more murders, which till then had been continual; and we can see for ourselves that, by keeping our eyes open, we can walk about Canton in perfect safety. The prince therefore refused yesterday the guard of twenty Portuguese sailors, placed at his orders by the commander of the Principe Carlos. Our suite consists of two hundred mocking, provoking, and, above all, inquisitive little blackguards, who certainly return a hundred-fold the annoyance I must have caused in my childhood to some Chinese merchant lost in Paris, by staring at him with all my eyes, and dogging his footsteps.

18th February, 1867.—We have been trying to make some purchases, with good-natured Father Chouzy for our guide; thanks to him, we discovered that the Chinese servant who had served us as interpreter till now, had been befriending the tradesmen against us, and saying, "Ask them ten times as much; they don't know the price, and will pay anything." However if there are plenty of goods in the shops, they are all modern ware. The Chinese will pay far higher prices for old china than our collectors, and the only pretty things we found were in the "Street of Eternal Purity," at the shop of a broker who was just taking them out of some boxes arrived from Amsterdam. Some had not yet been opened, and no doubt some European will take their contents a second time across the world!

Guided by our compass (for our walking is conducted like sailing here) we explored the east end of the town, and passed by a large open square from which issued the most noxious odours. Presently we stumbled against some dead bodies of lepers; soon some fifty of these wretched creatures, each lifting up the mat that covered him, stretched out their hands to us, too weak to sit upright. When they feel themselves worn out they come here, and, cowering close together, wait resignedly for death! In this miserable district, where no healthy person dares set foot, and where we have strayed by chance, the lepers keep order amongst themselves. We saw three or four, still on their feet though tottering, dragging their dead companions from the rotten mats which had served them for shelter first, and then for coffin; they draw them by the feet to the water's edge, like dogs who are to be drowned; and for them, too, the river becomes a cemetery!

As everything here is sharply contrasted, we soon arrived at the wealthy quarter, and being civilly received in several shops, took notice of the dress of the well-to-do families. As the autumn and winter advance, the Chinese pile jacket upon jacket and trousers upon trousers; they have no fires in their rooms, and never undress themselves to go to bed; in the depth of the winter they are like onions, with fifteen or twenty coats, and keep up a gentle warmth in this way under their piled up coverings of wadding—exhaling an odour which I refrain from describing. In the spring

the pelisse is restored to the wardrobe, and the jackets diminish gradually in inverse ratio to the thermometer, till the garments which have been prisoners for six months are restored to the light of day. They are a nation of chrysalids!

Water, it would seem, therefore, is not sympathetic to them. But if they do not make use of it for washing, I will do them the justice to say that they have put it to a most ingenious use for clockmaking. For centuries Canton has made use of a very simple hydraulic apparatus, consisting of four copper basons placed upon steps, and so arranged that the upper rim of one touches the lower rim of the next; the water falling drop by drop marks the twenty-four hours by means of a float corresponding to a graduated scale.

We finished our day's work by visiting the place of execution, where a very familiar and jovial apprentice-headsman insisted upon shaking hands with me, and then passed the "Venus Mount," near which are the examination rooms. On either side of an avenue 300 yards long are arranged at right angles 9238 square niches, in which there is just room for a man to sit. At the great examinations every three years, the candidates are shut up here for a week. The essays are written, and from this examination issue the graduates, bachelors of arts, doctors, mandarins, men of letters, and chief officials of the Celestial Empire. There are 32,000 letters in the principal dialect, which in this competition must always be employed! All the merit, it

appears, is in the calligraphy. A commission of ten mandarins, under the presidency of the minister of public instruction, examines the copies and awards the prize to the best handwriting.

This trait stamps the Chinese, and may be taken as the type of their intelligence and civilization. They are undoubtedly clever and capable, with a genius for trade, and an astonishing comprehension and power of carrying to perfection the details of material life. It must be owned that they were civilized, and possessed the compass, gunpowder, the arts of weaving and printing, when our forefathers were eating acorns in the forests of Gaul, covered with wild-beasts' skins, and using arrows for weapons; but this civilisation, which seems to have been cast in a mould, has long since congealed there.

As regards politics, their 1789 came centuries before ours: the aristocracy of birth has given place to open competition for office by public examination. When the lowest coolie can, by devoting himself to literary work, obtain the mandarin's button, how is it that these officials, chosen by free competition, become such merciless despots, venal and unjust, ill-treating the people from whom they sprang only yesterday?

The same thing chills one in the temples. In spite of the number of worshippers, the stupid routine and cupidity of the bonzes show that the heart is absent, and that forms only are considered.

The Chinaman has no religion; he worships only his own interests, and is consequently the victim of a

blind superstition and adoration for the spirits who are supposed to preside over wealth.

And throughout all their works, though there may sometimes be perfection, there is no spark of light. All extremes meet here: coffins are adorned and venerated, and the new-born infant is killed without scruple. Merit is sought in calligraphy, not in ideas. How can there be any growth of thought in a country, where a clever man's whole life is spent in learning the alphabet? The result is that ninety-nine hundredths of the population of China are unacquainted with half the signs which express ideas, and that they cannot understand the language of those who study for themselves and not for the sake of imparting knowledge. The great scholars pass their lives brush in hand, endeavouring to trace with elegance, on a porous brick, pious sentences which will be unintelligible to the common people, and which, dazzling in gold in their pagodas, have no meaning to the minds of the worshippers. Their literature is nothing but a stroke of the brush, and the Chinaman, far advanced in material progress, remains fatally backward in the field of thought.

THE END.

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